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P27

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Not the editor's letter

What a Balls Up!

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Job **Communities Editor**
Favourite word **"Gertcha!" (while lifting up her skirt and flapping it...)**
Say hello to Auntie Den at **Yourbizarre.bizarremag.com/skull_smasher**, or email her at **AuntieDen@dennis.co.uk**

Tickle me under the chin and call me Fluffy! Did we have a fucking blast at the **Manchester Bizarre Ball** or what? I'm still dazed after rocking with The Eighties Matchbox B-Line Disaster and having my eardrums grated by Rolo Tomassi. It made my pussy all a-quiver. That's pussy cat, purrrverts!

And we only have time for a few gulps of air before the **London Bizarre Ball** on **Saturday 20 November** at The Scala. There's still time to get your tickets to see **The Damned**, **The Tiger Lillies**, **The Circus Of Horrors** and *Bizarre*'s very own **Alix Fox**, to name but a few. But be quick... tickets are selling fast! Get yours at **Tinyurl.com/BizBallLondon**.

And if that's not enough to sharpen your claws on, don't forget **CUT!**, *Bizarre*'s **FREE** monthly film club. Our next screening on **18 November** is ***I Spit On Your Grave***, a remake of the 1978 revenge flick that isn't released in cinemas until 2011. Check out full details on **p121**.

From films to femmes, *Bizarre*'s new **Ultra Vixens** site has been the epicentre of a titanic alt.girl explosion! Get acquainted with our latest recruits, and vote for your fave girls to attend the Bizarre Ball, at **UltraVixens.net**.

Get your ass down there or eat my kitty litter dust!

Auntie Den

ILLUSTRATION: BEN NEWMAN (BENNEWMANART.BLOGSPOT.COM)

BIZARRE READER OF THE MONTH

This month's winner of a Box Of Crap* from the *Bizarre* office is Wailoun from Glasgow, who says, **"I used to have a third nipple in my armpit which I cut off with a pair of nailclippers... it hurt like hell!"**

WANT TO WIN?
Sign up to YourBizarre.com. We'll be keeping an eye on the photos you upload, and choosing our favourite pic to appear here each month.

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* BOX OF CRAP CONTENTS MAY VARY FROM THE ONE SHOWN HERE, BUT IT WILL BE SHITE – GUARANTEED!

what the hell is... BIZARRE?

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BIZARRE
Kat Von D

COVER: JAMES DIMMOCK/CORBIS OUTLINE

2 World's biggest alt.community!

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YourBizarre is the beating heart of the alt.community online; a social networking site where you can show off, share your photos and chat to other freaks and geeks. And best of all, it's **100 PER CENT FREE** to join! Simply sign up at **Yourbizarre.com**!

3 The greatest parties on earth!

See *Bizarre* come to life at our wild parties! The **London Bizarre Ball** on **20 November 2010** is our next big event, and we're working on other parties and shows to bring the *Bizarre* experience to every corner of the UK.

LOOK! Get your Bizarre Ball tickets on p49, and check out our new film night, CUT, on p121!

TURN OVER TO SEE WHAT WEIRDNESS WE HAVE IN STORE THIS MONTH...

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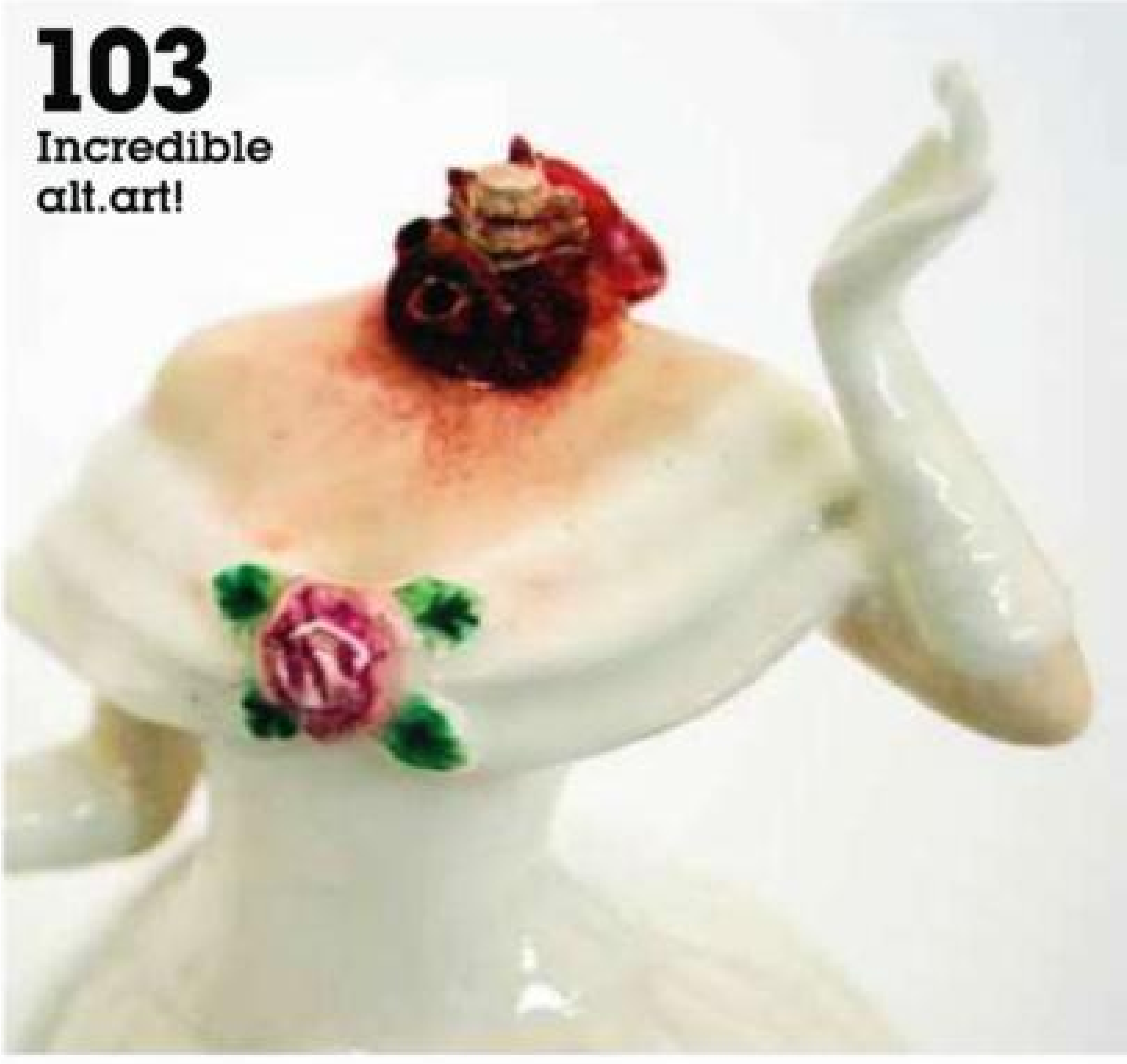

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PICTURES: CHRISTIAN SAINT; JOE PLIMMER; PA PHOTOS; JAMES DIMMOCK/CORBIS OUTLINE; CEDRIC ARNOLD

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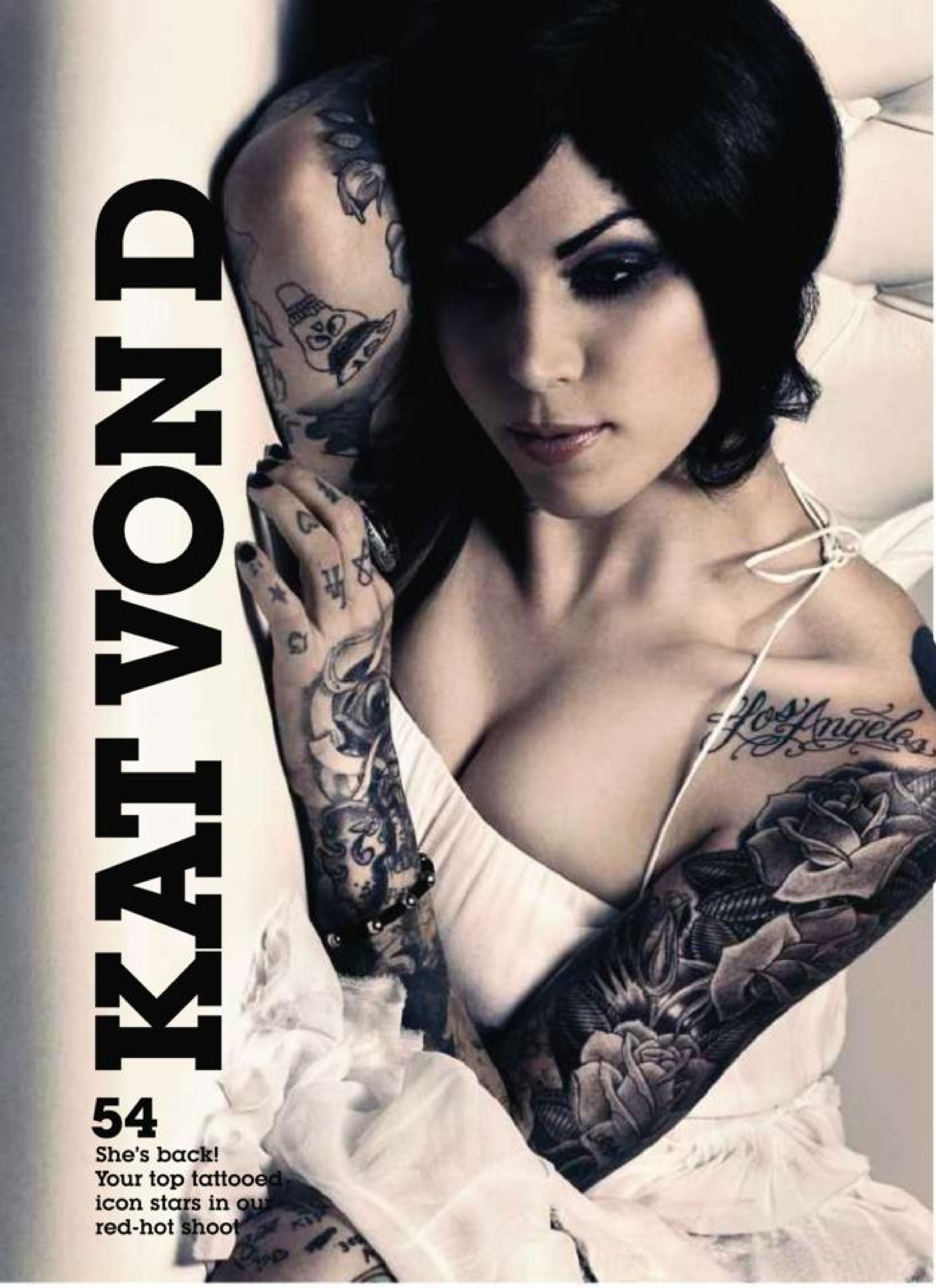

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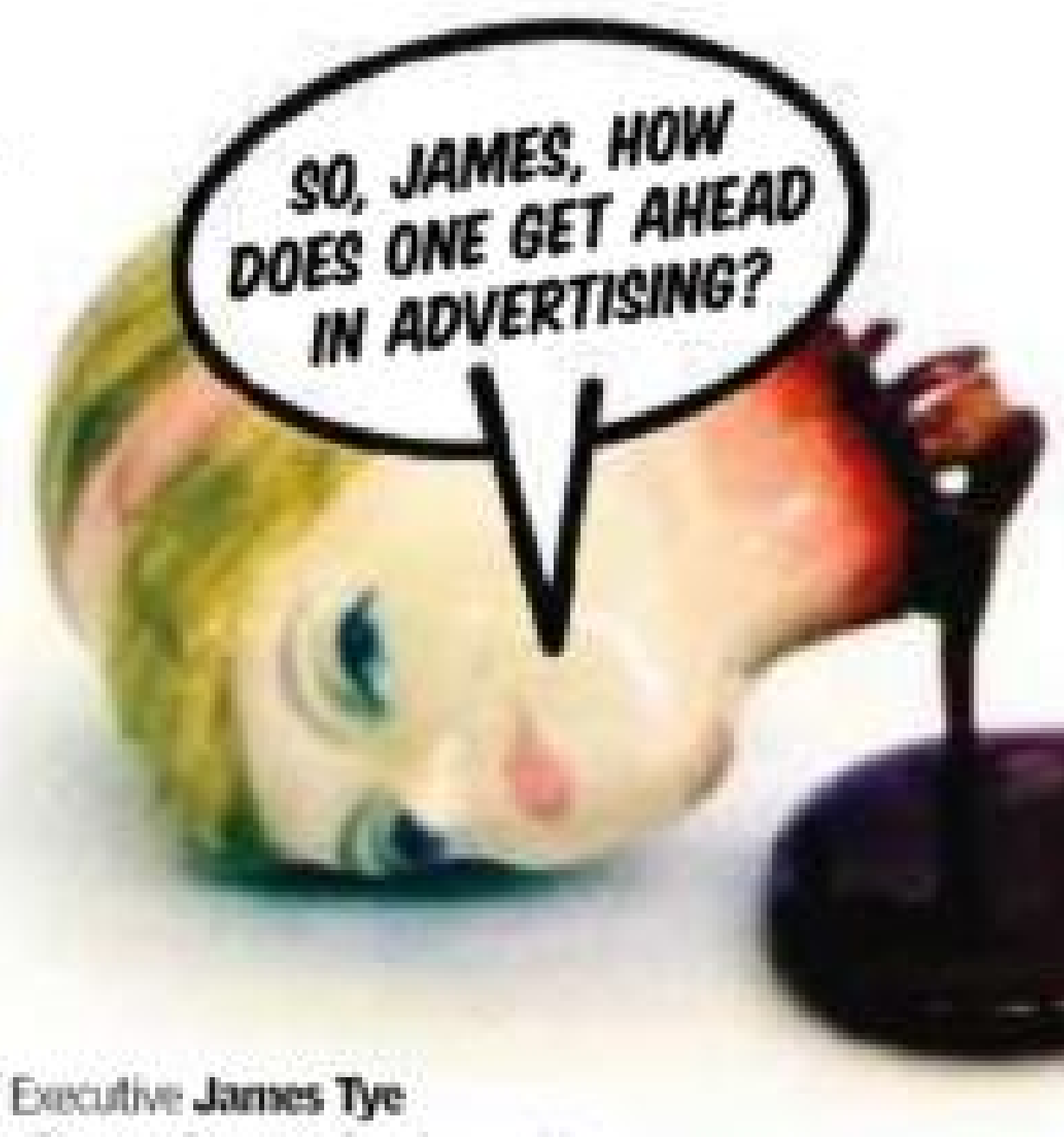
SO, JAMES, HOW DOES ONE GET AHEAD IN ADVERTISING?

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TRUCK TRAGEDY

CHINA Firefighters battle to rescue a lorry driver from his cab after it was crushed in an 11-vehicle pile up in Beijing, August 2010. The accident happened after a lorry flipped onto its side during the early morning rush-hour, causing the containers it was carrying to slide off and block the busy fifth ringroad that circles the city. The driver pictured here slammed into the tailback that had formed in the heavy traffic, causing a violent chain collision that injured dozens of people. It took firefighters two hours to free the driver, and his legs were so badly damaged that doctors were forced to amputate them.

PICTURE: WENN

北京消
FIRE BE
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WHO'S PULLING THIS GIRL?

HUSKIING

USA Six husky dogs pull nine-year-old Amber Hajdukovich across Alaska's Chena River, for a reality TV show called *Stupid Alaskan Tricks*. Amber's best run lasted 17 seconds before the dog team, led by local husky keeper Brent Brass, ran out of flat ground to bound along. The barking mad line-up for the TV show also included a man filleting a king salmon while blindfolded, and a guy carving a bust of Sarah Palin from a spruce log.

PIC: JOHN WAGNER/NEWS-MINER/ZUMA PRESS

WHO DO THESE BELONG TO?

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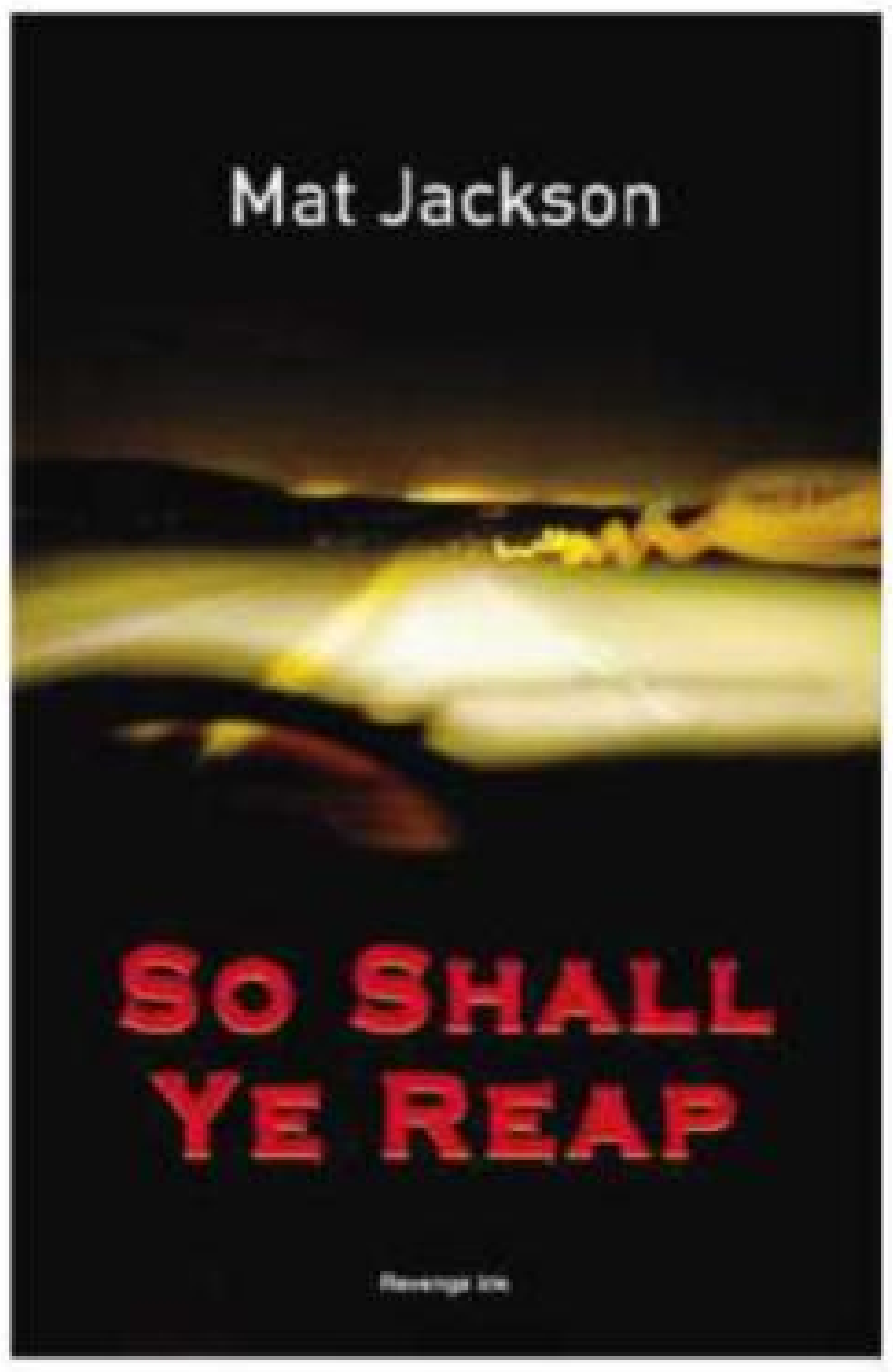
Dark Brooding Fiction



SO SHALL YE REAP
MAT JACKSON
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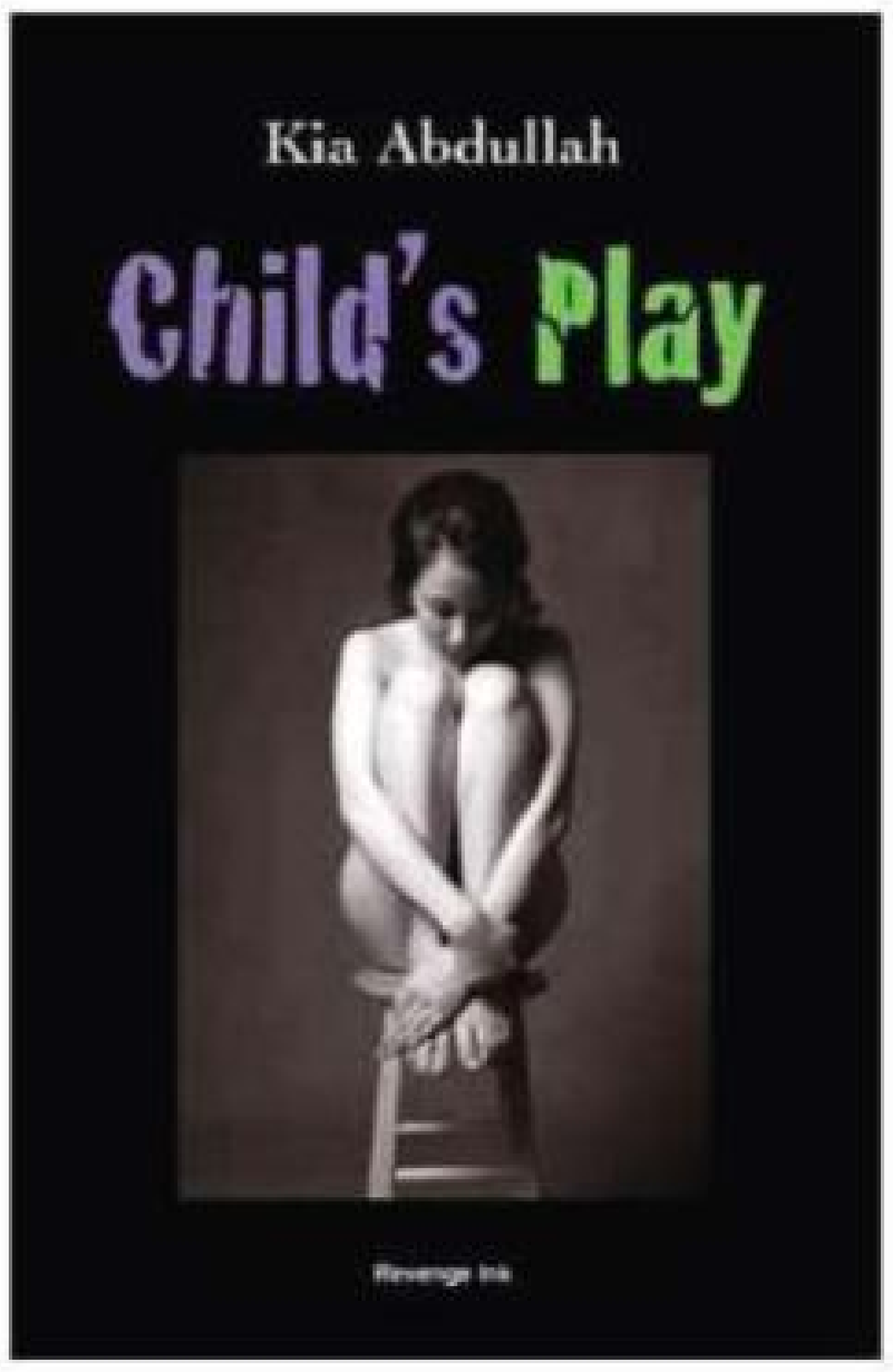
Jessica Balans is a stable accounting partner in a posh London firm. Her brother-in-law Dave is a humble lorry-driver. Jessica, a married woman, falls passionately in love and must choose between her family and her lover. Dave must struggle against a deeper darker taste for underage flesh. On a trip to France, their stories intermingle as Dave gives in with brutal violence to his horrific desires while Jessica finds she can no longer lie to her husband. Their lives meet in a terrifying way on the highways of France where it appears as if the only man fit to take care of Jessica's little daughter might be her uncle Dave, the paedophile...



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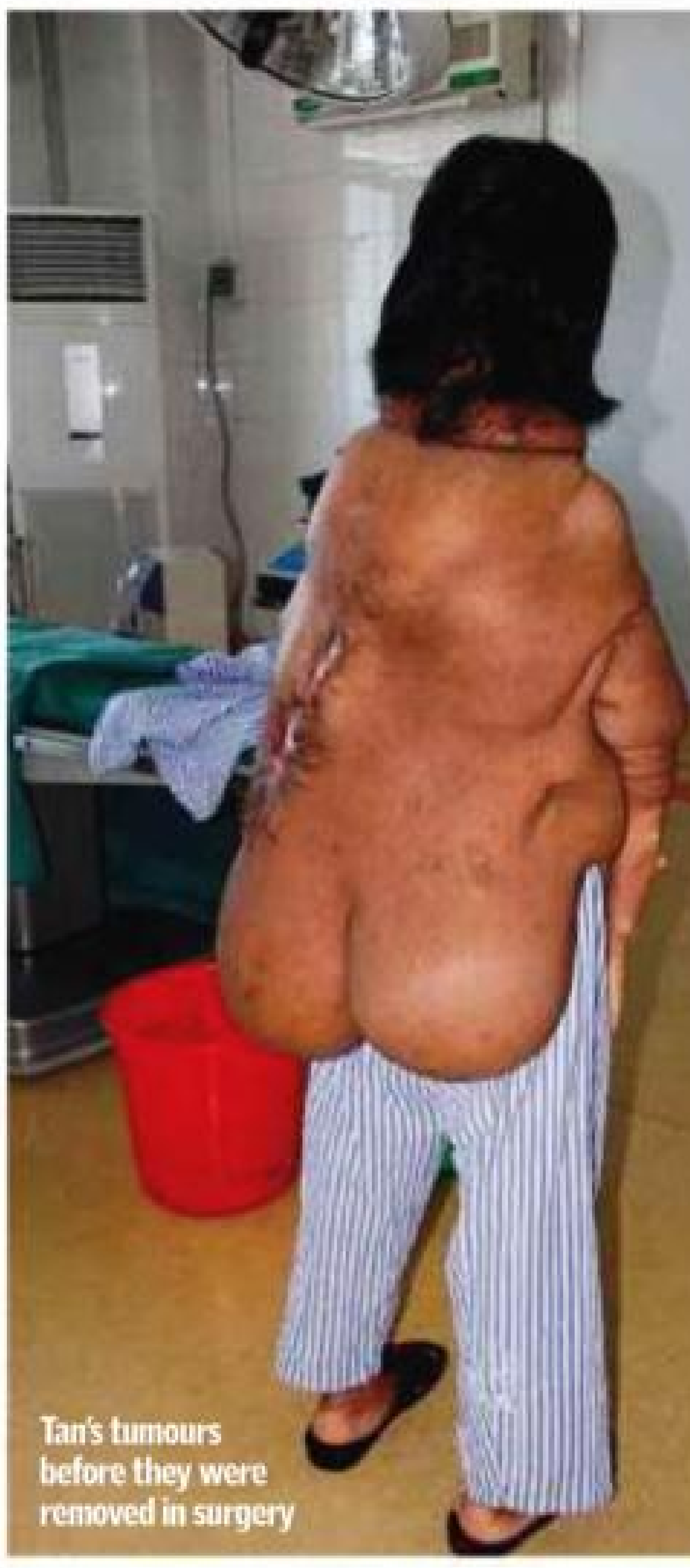
Stitch Skull Jayne dress, Sizes S-2XL;
Zombie Sparrow button up top, Sizes S-2XL.

TUMOUR TRAGEDY

CHINA Tan Yi suffers from a rare condition where benign tumours develop in her nerve tissue. Tan, from Gaozhou in Guangdong province, noticed the problem 23 years ago when two walnut-sized lumps appeared on her back while she was pregnant with her first child. The tumours, called neurofibromas, quickly grew to the size of sandbags, and Tan developed growths on other parts of her body. Tan found the weight of her back tumours unbearable when they reached 22.5kgs, and recently had a five-hour operation to remove them.

PICTURES: REX FEATURES



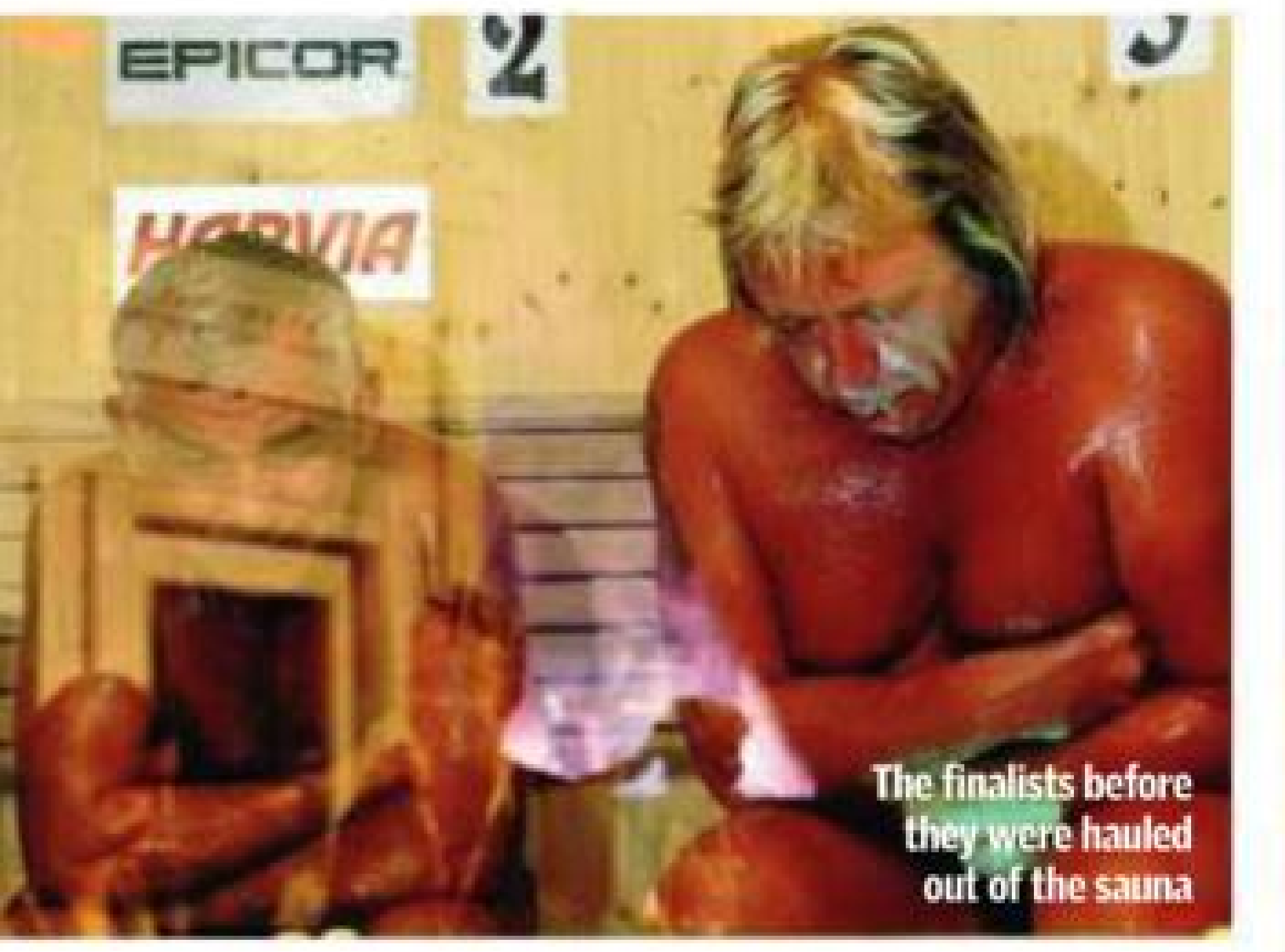
Tan's tumours before they were removed in surgery

WHY IS HE SWEATING?

SEARING HEAT

FINLAND Vladimir Ladyzhensky is carried out of a 110°C sauna during the final of the World Sauna Championship in Heinola. He later died from his injuries. Russian Ladyzhensky and his Finnish rival, Timo Kaukonen, were competing to see who could withstand the heat the longest, but began to feel unwell six minutes into the contest. Both men were dragged out of the sauna by championship officials, but collapsed soon afterwards and were rushed to hospital. Kaukonen survived but, due to Ladyzhensky's tragic death, the event organisers have said the championship will never be held again.

PICTURES: REX FEATURES



The finalists before they were hauled out of the sauna

WHAT GOES IN THESE HOLES?

FEEDING FRENZY

INDIA They're gagging for it! These gaping-gilled catfish in Gadisar Lake, Rajasthan, are slipping over one another to get their chops around a piece of bread. The lake, which is a reservoir built in the 14th century as part of a temple complex, looks like gloopy oil when the greedy creatures rise up to snaffle food thrown in by tourists. Catfish are bottom feeders and they're negatively buoyant, which means that they usually sink rather than float, so these whiskered flappers swimming against gravity are certainly working up an appetite for supper.

PICTURE: KRISHNENDU HALDER/REUTERS

WHO'S THE DADDY?

Hernandez chills out, waiting for his ride to the shops where he performs...

WEE WONDER

COLOMBIA This 24-year-old dude – measuring just 27ins – has been certified as the world's smallest man by *Guinness World Records*. Edward Nino Hernandez from Bogota stopped growing when he was two years old, and doctors have never been able to explain why. Hernandez works part-time as a performer in department stores, is currently playing a drug dealer in a film, and has a 5ft-tall, 18-year-old girlfriend who towers over him. But while he's happy to be unique, the 10kg man says, "It bothers me that people are always touching me and picking me up." The previous smallest man in the world was He Pingping of China, who was 1.5ins shorter and died in March.

PICTURES: WILLIAM FERNANDO MARTINEZ/AP/PA PHOTOS

... Then entertains customers with a headstand

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SHEFFIELD, City Hall Fri 28 Jan
0114 2 789 789 www.sheffieldcityhall.co.uk

CARDIFF, New Theatre Thu 3, Fri 4, Sat 5 Feb
029 2087 8889 www.newtheatrecardiff.co.uk

BIRMINGHAM, Alexandra Theatre Tues 8 Feb
0844 847 2302 www.alexandratheatre.org.uk

OXFORD, New Theatre Wed 9 Feb
0844 847 1585 www.newtheatreoxford.org.uk

HALIFAX, Victoria Theatre Sat 12 Feb
01422 351158 www.victoriatheatre.co.uk

A VALENTINES DAY MASSACRE

ABERDEEN, Music Hall Mon 14 Feb
01224 641122 www.boxofficeaberdeen.com

THE 4 CHAPTERS FROM HELL

EDINBURGH, Playhouse Mon 21 Feb
0844 847 1660 www.edinburghplayhouse.org.uk

MANCHESTER, Palace Theatre Mon 28 Feb
0844 847 2275 www.manchesterpalace.org.uk

GLASGOW, King's Theatre Mon 14 March
0844 871 7648
www.ambassadortickets.com/King's-Theatre

SOUTHSEA, Kings Theatre Mon 21 March
023 9282 8282 www.kings-southsea.com

NORTHAMPTON, Royal & Derngate Wed 23 March
01604 624811 www.royalandderngate.co.uk

Rogue maidens BIZARRE ROCK HAMMER SkinDeep Le Maitre

WARNING: The Circus of Horrors contains some nudity & language of an adult nature, it is not suitable for children, sissies or chavs. This show contains nuts!

THE GRINDER

EDITED BY ALIX FOX
ALIX_FOX@DENNIS.CO.UK

Your monthly mash-up of NEWS, VIEWS, OOZE and OOHS!

DEVIL'S FOOD

The world's first over-18s smut'n'gore cake shop will have you in tiers

Artist Pete Fowler contributes scary cookies to the shop

WHAT DO YOU GET IF YOU COMBINE Victoria sponge, spread-legged clunge and sugary gunge? Eat Your Heart Out: the world's first adults-only cake store. Opening from 28-31 October in the 'dungeon' basement of offbeat London gift shop Maiden, the pop-up shop will sell creepy'n'kinky desserts, including meringue tampons with a jammy menstrual dip, taxidermy-inspired roadkill sweets covered in realistic edible fur created by artist David Smith, and anatomical hearts that buyers will have to don protective boiler suits in order to eat: they contain bags of syrupy blood that explode violently when bitten.

SWEET TOOTH

Organiser Emmylou Cakehead tells *Bizarre*, "treats will be dished out by staff dressed as sexy undertakers, and we're hoping to install a 'bloodbath footbath' at the entrance. Customers will have to pull on surgeons' wellies and slosh through innards to get to the goodies. I'm also cooking 69 'Chaos Cookies'. Some have delicious flavours such as Turkish delight, while others will be infused with cat food, shepherd's pie, washing-up liquid, tobacco, extra-strong garlic and garden soil. Brave nibblers won't be told which biccies are which!"

To wash down the petrifying pastries, EYHO will be serving Alibi, a new 'pretox' beverage reputed to ease the nasty after-effects of alcohol if consumed before a night on the lash. But buyers will still feel nauseous if they buy 'Hangover Cupcakes'. "They're horribly dry, to simulate that arid-mouth feeling you get the morning after a booze-up, and they're flavoured with cigarettes, kebab, beer and vomit!" cackles Emmylou. "If you're after something sweeter, try a wedge of Holly And The Icing's tooth-filled Vagina Dentata flange cake, or a mini 'Muff Muffin', served with a syringe of period gunk."

Artist George Morton-Clark will be offering dirty cream sponges based on his 'asphyxiation porn' paintings; the pies will be shaped like gasping, dying women's heads, presented in plastic bags as though they're being suffocated." Urk!

George Morton-Clark will spoil you rotten

CUP-QUAKING IN YOUR BOOTS

Eat Your Heart Out continues two of the major foodie trends of 2010 – kitsch, extravagantly-decorated cupcakes and experimental Heston Blumenthal-style 'molecular gastronomy' – and adds a hefty slice of *Bizarre*-approved grossness. And, with fans of *Dexter* making bloodthirsty cakes to celebrate the launch of season five of the serial killer telly show last month, we predict that gastronomic goriness is going to be the next big pig-out fashion. Fancy a hot gross bun, anyone? **Alix Fox**

Go to Evilcakes.wordpress.com

PICTURES: NATHAN PASK

Emmylou Cakehead serves up fang-filled flange flan

Death by chocolate

Trend-setting confectioners with pie-in-the-sky ideas

The Jellymongers turn into Jellymingers for EYHO

Bompas & Parr, The Jellymongers

This pair of posh nosh bros have previously created breathable clouds of gaseous gin and tonic. They'll be serving Catholic communion wafers and holy water at EYHO... with a secret twist. And in December, they'll be holding a 'flavoured screening' of *Indiana Jones And The Temple Of Doom* at Welbeck Abbey in Nottinghamshire, where viewers will be able "to experience the movie with their mouths."

Jellymongers.co.uk

Black Cherry Bakery

Run by Alix Graham, this store only sells demonic desserts made with vegan ingredients. She was commissioned to make a skull cake to mark the 10th anniversary of Bloodstock festival, and has been crafting edible maggots and dismembered doll parts for EYHO.

Blackcherrybakery.co.uk

Lily Vanilli

Lily Vanilli specialises in the grotesque, and her macabre muffins are now being stocked in Harrods. She's also launched a horror-themed recipe book. *A Zombie Ate My Cupcake* is published by CICO Books priced £9.99, but *Bizarre* readers can get it for £7.99. Call 01256 302699 and quote GLR4QG. Or win a copy by sending pictures of your craziest culinary creations to alix_fox@dennis.co.uk!

Lilyvanilli.com

LILY VANILLI in
A ZOMBIE ATE MY CUPCAKE!
25 deliciously weird cupcake recipes

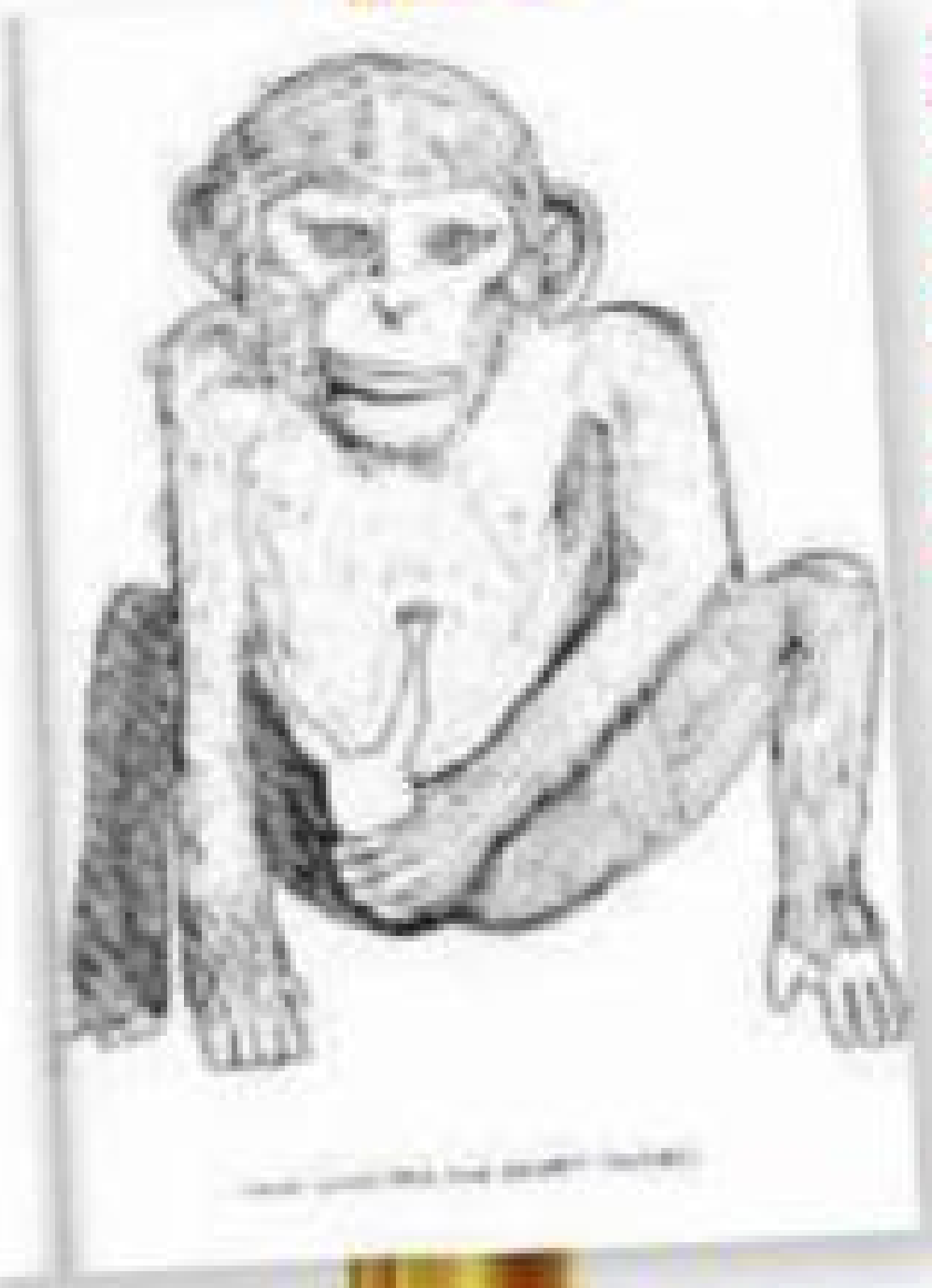
Storemags

CRAP CRAFTS

DOA DIY FOR SALE ONLINE

NAPPY STAINED WITH POOP IN THE SHAPE OF A SHOE

What a Croc of shit.

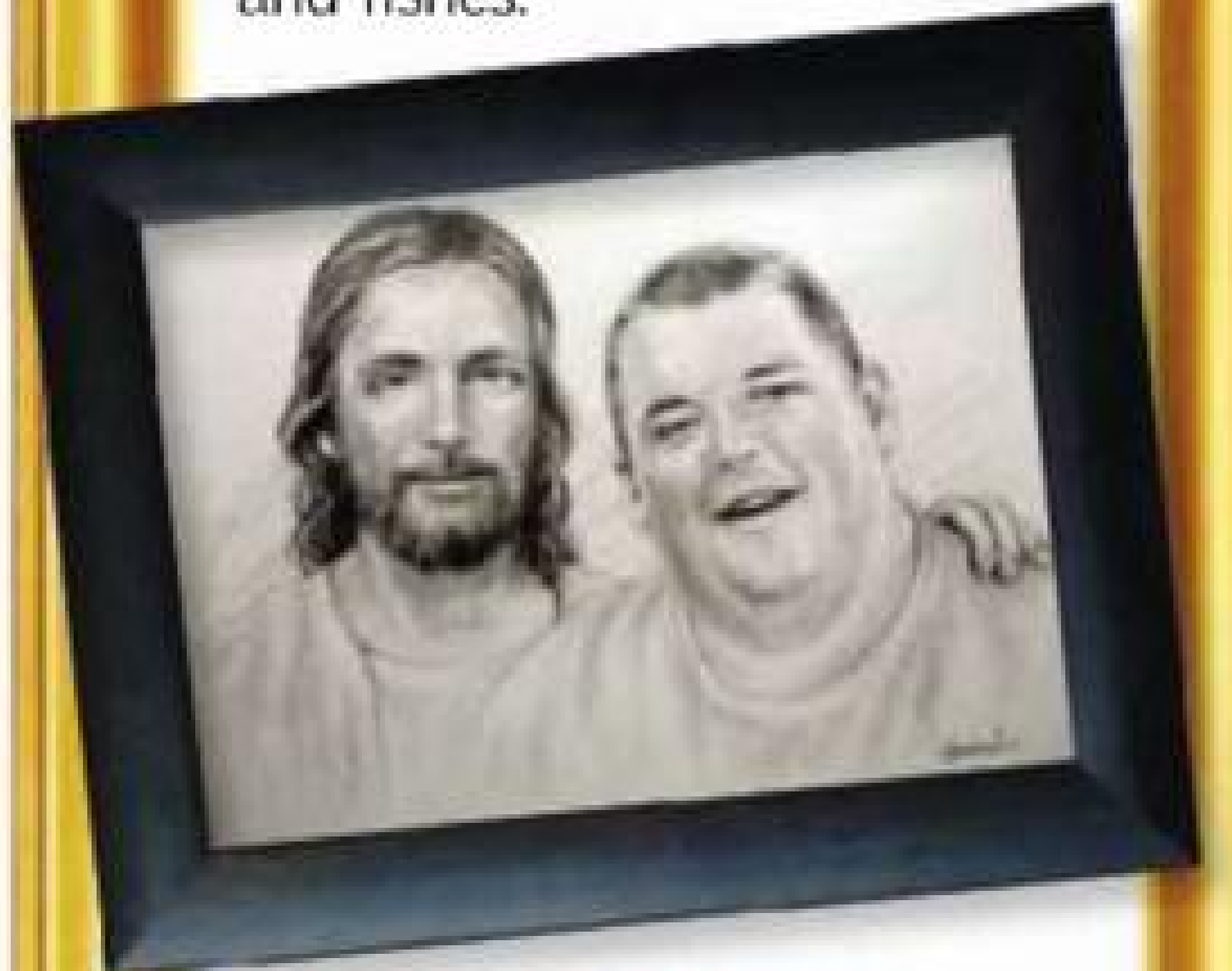


DRAWING OF A CHIMP GETTING A BLOW JOB FROM A FROG

If you've not seen the video that inspired this drawing of a chimpanzee using a frog like a Fleshlight, head to Tinyurl.com/frogjob. It's less 'toad in the hole', more 'hole in the toad' once he's finished shooting his simian spunk.

PORTRAIT OF YOU WITH JESUS

Say cheese! And loaves, and fishes.



MONKEY BABY REBORN DOLL

The creator spent months sculpting baby 'Kiki', saying "Only when I was satisfied did I bake her clay parts." She comes dressed in a nappy and babygro intended for premature babies.

See more horrendous handicrafts at Regretsy.com

Booby Prizes

The world's glammest trannies suck in their tums and tuck in their schlongs to compete in the 2010 La Femme Magnifique International Pageant

DUDE LOOKS LIKE A LADY!

A wonky Shirley Bassey, to be exact. Last month saw the 28th outing of the annual La Femme Magnifique International Pageant in Oregon, USA – a competition to find the planet's most glamorous female impersonators. The contest is only open to "anatomically correct males", who rely upon "illusionary artistry" to look like lasses. The use of feminising surgery or hormones is strictly prohibited.

Covered in more sequins than the contents of Debbie McGee's Hoover bag, the fabulous participants battle it out in four catwalk categories: Formal (floor-length gowns); Themed (this year's topic was 'The Garden Of Eden'); Talent (showtunes belted out with enough force to blast your opponents' wigs off their scalps); and Showgirl.

"The Showgirl section is the real biggie, and entrants construct incredible Vegas-style headdresses," the organisers say. "They're encouraged to design them for maximum glamour, not comfort – although no matter how heavy or huge their adornments, they must be able to walk gracefully, as though there's nothing on their heads."

And nothing's between their legs...

Camp-ouflage!

You've got them on bap to front, love

The new flower fairy checks her gunt for caterpillars

PICTURES: EYEVINE

He's giving us the hee-bee-Dee-bies

What a tool!

Illusionist Dee Christopher knows the drill when it comes to cunning stunts

Dee: "Do you want to give me a good drilling?"

PICTURES: ROZALIND WILLIAMS; MAKEUP: HALOHALO HAYNES

Storemags

FORGET REACHING THIRD BASE, magic trickster Dee Christopher gets more excited about going to Homebase, where he likes to buy power tools for his insane performances. This Halloween, the illusionist will debut a brand new life-threatening act, which involves playing Russian Roulette with electric drills and his face – while blind.

"There will be four drills: three will contain dead batteries, but one will be flesh-shreddingly fully charged," he explains. "I'll have to pick a trio of tools, hold them up to my head, one by one, and pull the triggers." If he picks incorrectly, his brains will be splattered all over the walls like paint on a decorator's boombox. To help him avoid an accidental trepanning episode, Dee will enlist a volunteer from his audience to hand him each drill, and he'll try to read their reactions. But to make things difficult, his eyes will be covered in duct tape. "I usually use a combination of visual, aural and tactile cues to tell what people are thinking, so by removing my sight I'm really upping the risk factor," Dee says. "It'll be like crossing a motorway using just my ears to judge whether I'm safe. I'll be limited solely to spotting fluctuations in the volunteer's heart rate and voice."

The stuntman with a screw loose has been learning magic since he was four, and he's also got a black belt in martial arts. "Fighting helps me recognise split-second changes in people's faces that reveal what moves they're about to pull," Dee tells us. "It also gives me extremely fast hands. Plus, I'm very good at lying! It's no fib that I'm developing a twisted take on the old 'catching a bullet in the teeth' trick, though – readers should look out for that soon. I also want to bend things with my mind."

See Dee hopefully not die at Club Antichrist's Halloween party on 29 October in London. **Alix Fox**

Go to Clubantichrist.com and Deechristopher.com

TIME OF THE MONTH

UPCOMING STUFF THAT YOU SHOULD GET DOWN TO

PICTURES: MATT THOMAS

28-31 OCTOBER
GRIMM UP NORTH FILM FESTIVAL

Dancehouse and Odder Bar, Manchester

Zombie parades! An exhibition of gory props and prosthetics! Q&As with horror and sci-fi casts and crews! Your good friend Billy Zane! Tom 'Draco Malfoy' Felton! Gemma Atkinson from Hollyoaks! Eh?

31 OCTOBER
PHANTOM OF THE OPERA: SILENT FILM WITH LIVE MUSIC

Picturehouse, Liverpool

The 1925 silent horror flick is given a spine-tingling live soundtrack by seven-piece band The Laze, who mix rock, classical and electronica.

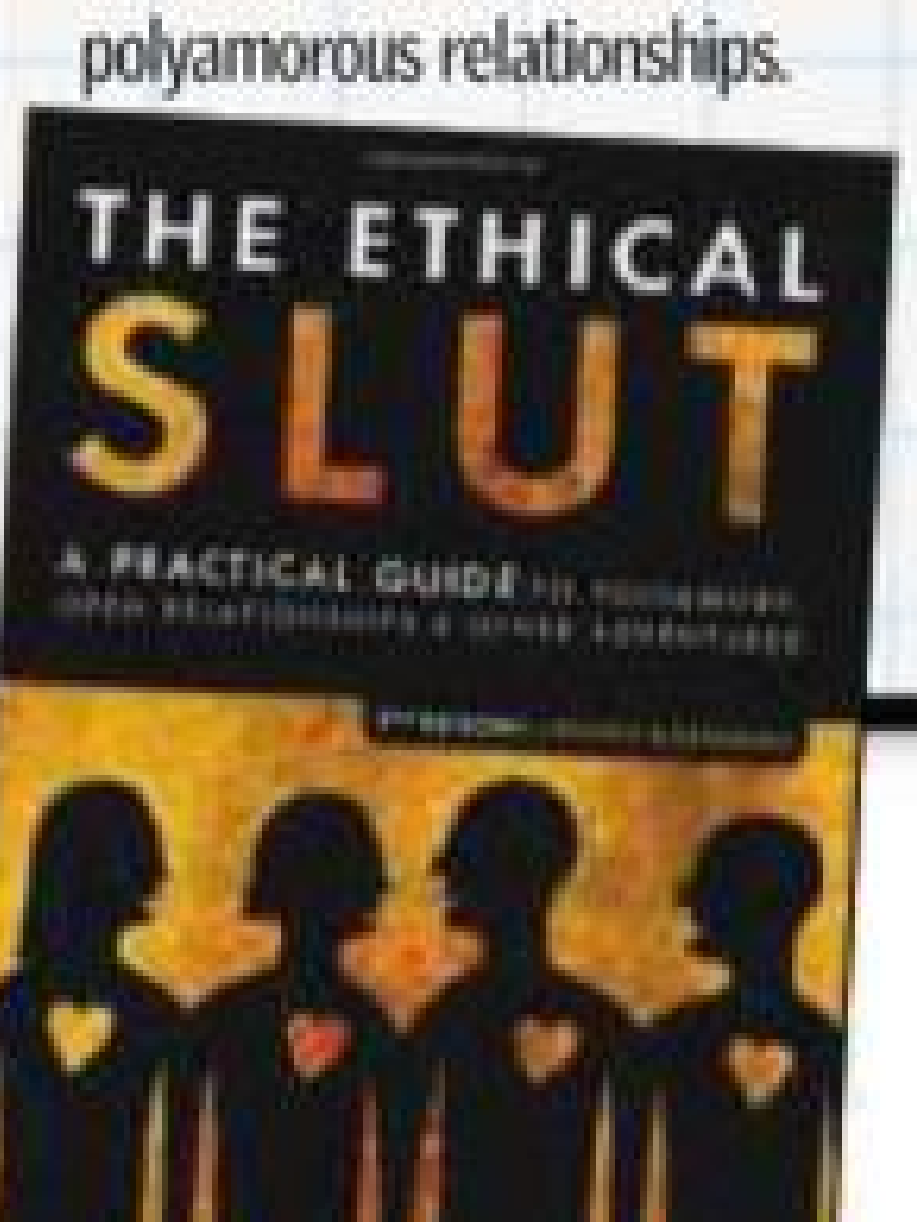
1 NOVEMBER
THE BIG FOUR LIVE FROM SOFIA DVD IS OUT

Metallica, Slayer, Megadeth and Anthrax first shared a stage in June, in Bulgaria. Now they're in your living room.

10 NOVEMBER
'WORKING THROUGH JEALOUSY' WORKSHOP

London

Dossie Easton, co-author of *The Ethical Slut*, gives tips on how to handle the green-eyed monster in open and polyamorous relationships.



13 NOVEMBER
NATIONAL INDIAN PUDDING DAY

Eat some gulab jamun while jazzing off to a cream pie smut flick starring Sahara Knite.

16 – 20 NOVEMBER
BOXED: A BEATBOXING ADVENTURE

Bristol Old Vic

'Mazin' motormouth Shlomo heads up this wicked show full of beatboxed tunes that'll make you go "WOAH!" Highly recommended by our Foxy, who saw it in London earlier this year.

23 NOVEMBER
BIZARRE 170 IS OUT!

It's a bangers and Mosh themed issue! How d'ya like them spaffles?

The Hottest T-Shirts
on the net!
SHAKE & BAKE!
TUNA
Bird
Bird
Bird
Bird is
the word
GAME OVER
STOP FOLLOWING ME!
MAGAZINE COLLECTORS
TEND TO HAVE A LOT OF ISSUES
BAZINGA!
na na na na
na na na na
na na na na
na na na na
BATMAN!
first rule of tea club: never talk about tea club
rofl
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We're always creating hilarious new designs, so keep checking the site to make sure you're always wearing the freshest t-shirts!

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(The model used is over 18 years of age)

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PICTURE: ZERO COOL, NADIA MOUSTAPHA
DC!
LOOK... I JUST LIKE DRAWING DICKS ON CHICKENS, ALL RIGHT?

Dickchicken: Drawing a chook, not choking the chicken

SPRAY-FC

Why are pictures of penis-headed poultry popping up in Bristol?

WE'RE NOT SURE IF GRAFFITI ARTIST Dickchicken is a leg or a breast man, but we do know that he likes both types of cock. His trademark motif – a chicken with a wang where its head should be – is notorious in New York, where it illicitly pops up all over walls, lampposts, and other urban furniture across the city. Now Dickchicken has cock-a-doodled his hot, crispy-skinned logo around Bristol, after cutting-edge Newcastle-based street art collective, Zero Cool, encouraged him to come to the UK.

Although Dickchicken draws the same nob-topped rooster, over and over again, he never gets bored. "It's like a comedian telling the same joke to different audiences, or a band recording an album, then playing the same songs repeatedly at different gigs," Dickchicken explains. "The joy is that I get a new response each time."

Dickchicken says he "likes to make people laugh," but his art also has a message. "I hate the way mainstream culture has adopted graffiti as a symbol of youth culture, and corporations use it to sell shit," he explains. "So I chose an image that'd be difficult to hijack. I can't see Coca-Cola using a picture of a chicken with a huge erection on its neck any time soon."

Dickchicken artwork is available from Zerocoolgallery.com

Fancy coming across this on a nice walk?

it's fowl
©
DC/ZC

This chicken is repulsed by himself

THE FOX HOLE

OUR FOXY'S WONDERINGS, WANDERINGS & WITTERINGS

CONTACT FOXY: **ALIX_FOX@DENNIS.CO.UK**

BLISTERED SISTER

I'm afraid I haven't got so many perverted, peculiar and puerile adventures to report on this month, as I spent a lot of it ill with shingles. Sad face.

Fox-pox

An evil adult form of chicken pox that causes hideous blisters, shingles is nothing like Pringles: once you pop, you want it to stop *now*. It makes your skin look like something from 'Photo Assault'. Here's a picture of my arm (the shiny bits are where I tried to cool down the burning sensation with glittery aftersun for kids – *fail*). Mmmmmm, purdy skin bubbles! And it gets worse – they fill with blood and go a deep shade of maroon. Mmmmmm! Next month: Alix gets elephantiasis!

The SPAM box: A bit farty

SPAM-A-LAM-A-DING-DONG

The 2010 SPAM Cook Of The Year competition winners were announced last month. Recipes included SPAM mousse, SPAM muffins, Jamaican SPAM jerk, and – I kid you not – Mark Andrew, representing North East England, managed to win a prize with a concoction he named 'The SPAM Box'. How the hell did he get away with such an obvious vag reference? His invention is a solid block of processed meat with two holes scooped out, which are then filled with full-English brekkie ingredients. Cooking instructions include lines like, "Drop your beans into a nifty little SPAM shaft" and, "Deposit an egg into your preferred cavity". Mark, *Bizarre* salutes you.

SNAP'N'TICKLE

I persuaded/forced *Bizarre*'s El Noir and Photo Studio Slave Boy Pat to dress up as a man-eating shark and a cockroach for my 'Buy Curious' shopping pages. In this picture (left), Pat accidentally looks like he's giving a dwarf oral sex during some obscure pest-and-sea-creature-role-play scenario. I'm expecting to receive a letter from one of you who's really done this.

Nosh! Nosh!

IGUANA ALERT!

He came into our office to promote Werner Herzog's *Bad Lieutenant*. It was lovely.

A blue-bonced scaly old reptile with a massive gob... and an iguana

SPUNK & DISORDERLY

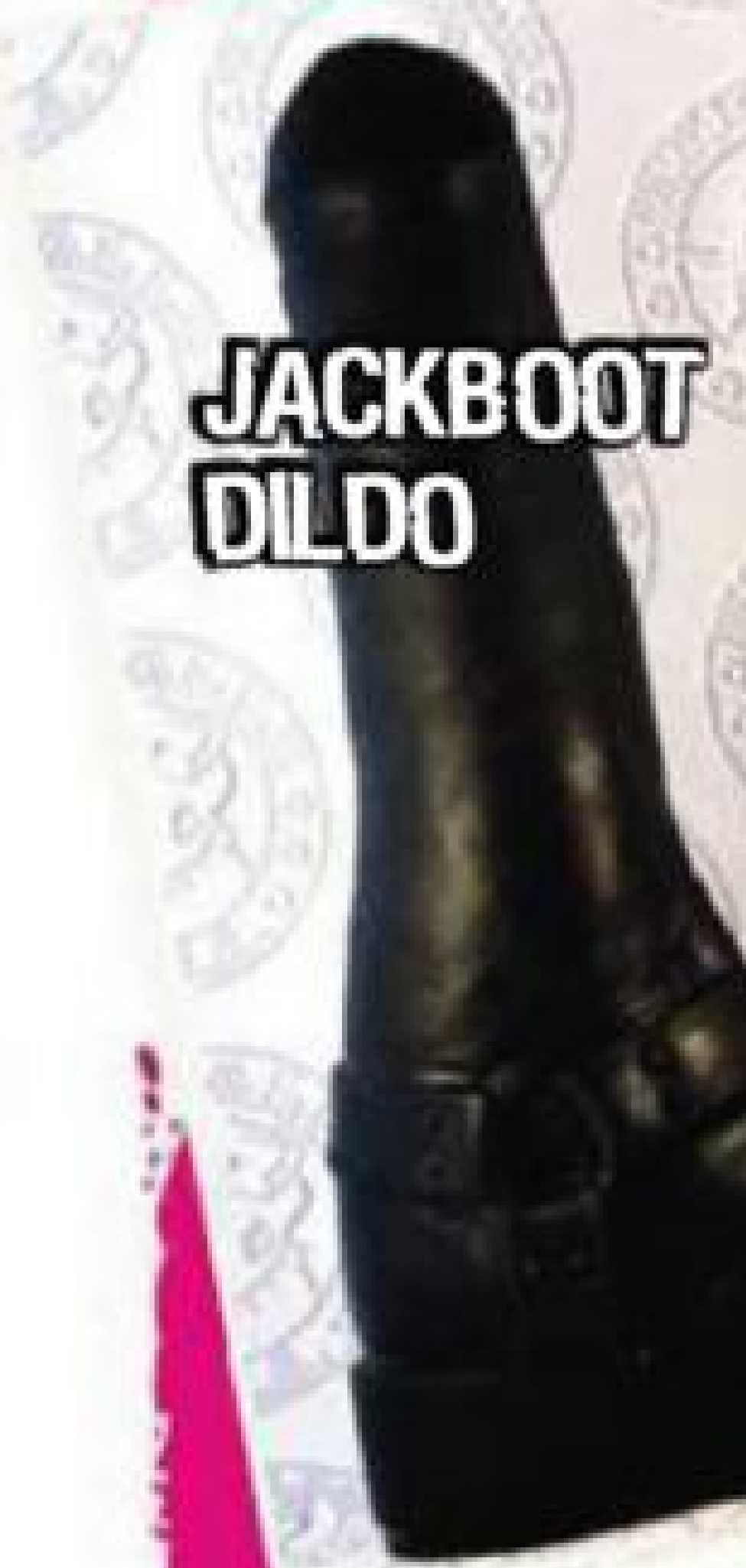
Molly Mounds' scary sex toy round-up

Here at *Bizarre*, we never fail to be amused by the ridiculous items that people stick up their holes. We've got a mate who works in a GUM clinic, who told us that she recently saw a female patient who'd attempted to use a teapot lid as a diaphragm. Presumably she'd combined this crap-tacular form of contraception with the withdrawal method, by instructing her partner to pull out and splurge all over her PG Tits.

Currently, our favourite blog about obscure orifice-filling instruments is Scarysextoyfriday.com, written by San Francisco smut fiend Molly Mounds. Here, she shares a selection of deranged dildos...

BOSS-EYED BABY DILDO

GENE SIMMONS-STYLE TONGUE BUTT PLUG



JACKBOOT DILDO

KIGU-WEARING DILDO

Rat Attack!

Say hello to the nocturnal rat-killers of Mumbai

THE SPRAWLING INDIAN CITY OF Mumbai has many problems – but one of its biggest is rats. In poverty-stricken streets strewn with rubbish, the disease-carrying rodents are thriving and, as they're getting smarter by the day – learning how to avoid traps and detect poisoned food – the situation is getting worse.

To fight the growing rodent hoard, a new army of nocturnal rat-catchers is stalking the streets. Armed with nothing more than a torch and a bamboo stick – they shine light in a rat's eyes, then smash the stunned blighter over the head! The brave rat-catchers need to bash a minimum of 30 rats per night to earn the princely sum of £5, and they work through the night to kill as many pests as they can.

At 6.30am, the exhausted rat-catchers return to base, where their kills are tallied-up and recorded in a special book. The Indian government is concerned about the threat of the plague, so a selection of rats are sent to Mumbai's bacteriology centre for testing.

So when you trot off to bed this evening, spare a thought for India's fearless rat-killers, many of whom will be grabbing rodents by the tail and dashing their brains on the ground as you slumber. Nice work, fellas.

Dr Blackthorn

I think it's... i think it's.. the fanny... or heart.

"Oh, it's raining rats Hallelujah, It's raining rats!"

PICTURES: NICK CUNARD/REX FEATURES

May the force be with you. Always

Ratatouille! Rat-a-fifty more like.

Bet with the devil you know

Calling all queens, jokers and poker-aces – the new *Bizarre* casino's got fun in spades

Want a sniff of Vegas without the stink of greasy all-day buffets, urine-scented pensioners and sweaty desperation? Fancy a flutter among fellow freaks? Or just want to while away some time on fun and free skill games? Make your way to our plush, new online casino and experience the thrill of blackjack, roulette, poker and Wicked Willie slots – which we're sure were a huge hit with Frank Sinatra and his Rat Pack at the Sands hotel. It's all hustle and bustle at the *Bizarre* tables as players chat with fellow readers and win* money. We'll be running regular tournaments, competitions and events online. So put your glad rags on, or even just a clean pair of boxer shorts, and roll up to the strangest gaming room in town. Casino.bizarremag.com

*or possibly spunk away.

StoreMags

WHO THE FUCK IS?

ED COX

The raver with clown syndrome

'CLOWNCORE' SOUNDS LIKE A SPECIALIST STRAND of fetish pornography, featuring squelchy custard-pie-fucking, squirty buttonhole flowers that shoot out streams of hot, stringy jizz, and gang-bangs, in which naked girls slip inside one red-nosed stud's hula-hoop-waisted trousers. However, while sploshy, circus-themed smut-films undoubtedly exist somewhere out there in the weird and wonderful world of kink (and we suspect Grimaldi and pals must have massive dongs – look at the size of their shoes!), 'clowncore' is actually a type of music. It's a fusion of techno, jungle, drum'n'bass, ska and, um, folk, created by dance producer Ed Cox.

He's been developing big beats with a big top feel for over a decade, and since 2004 he's been playing them in the streets – busking to his harsh speeding rhythms with an accordion while wearing full clown get-up.

Ed made his name putting on illegal raves with musical collaborator Monsta in the early noughties. The parties grew into a collective of musicians and producers known as Life4Land. "Life4Land has helped me massively over the years," Ed reveals. "It has given me the opportunity to bounce new ideas off people, and taught me that you can find amazing tunes from any genre of music, so long as you have the patience to sift through the stuff that's plain crap!"

Ed started clowning around when he began to perform on street pavements in order to reach a fresh audience outside of the rave scene. "I thought that a clown costume would complement the circussy vibe of my music, and make me more accessible to passers-by because the clobber makes me look less like a glowstick-wielding clubber, " Ed says.

But aren't many people frightened of clowns? "Generally, folk don't find me scary, although sometimes little kids get freaked out if a bassline suddenly booms out of my speakers and catches them off guard," he says. The public usually get into the groove, and people who you wouldn't expect to be fans, turn out to be really enthusiastic. The first time I busked, a 70-year-old lady started dancing to gabba techno. It was beautiful. Playing on high streets is fantastic; my dream gig would be to perform in a busy city centre, with a 100kw sound system on the back of an army truck, firing pink paint from water cannons at the police! I get some funny comments now and again, though. Once, one teenage kid said to another: 'Oi, look at that freak.' The other replied: 'Nah, he's that drum'n'bass clown, innit!'"

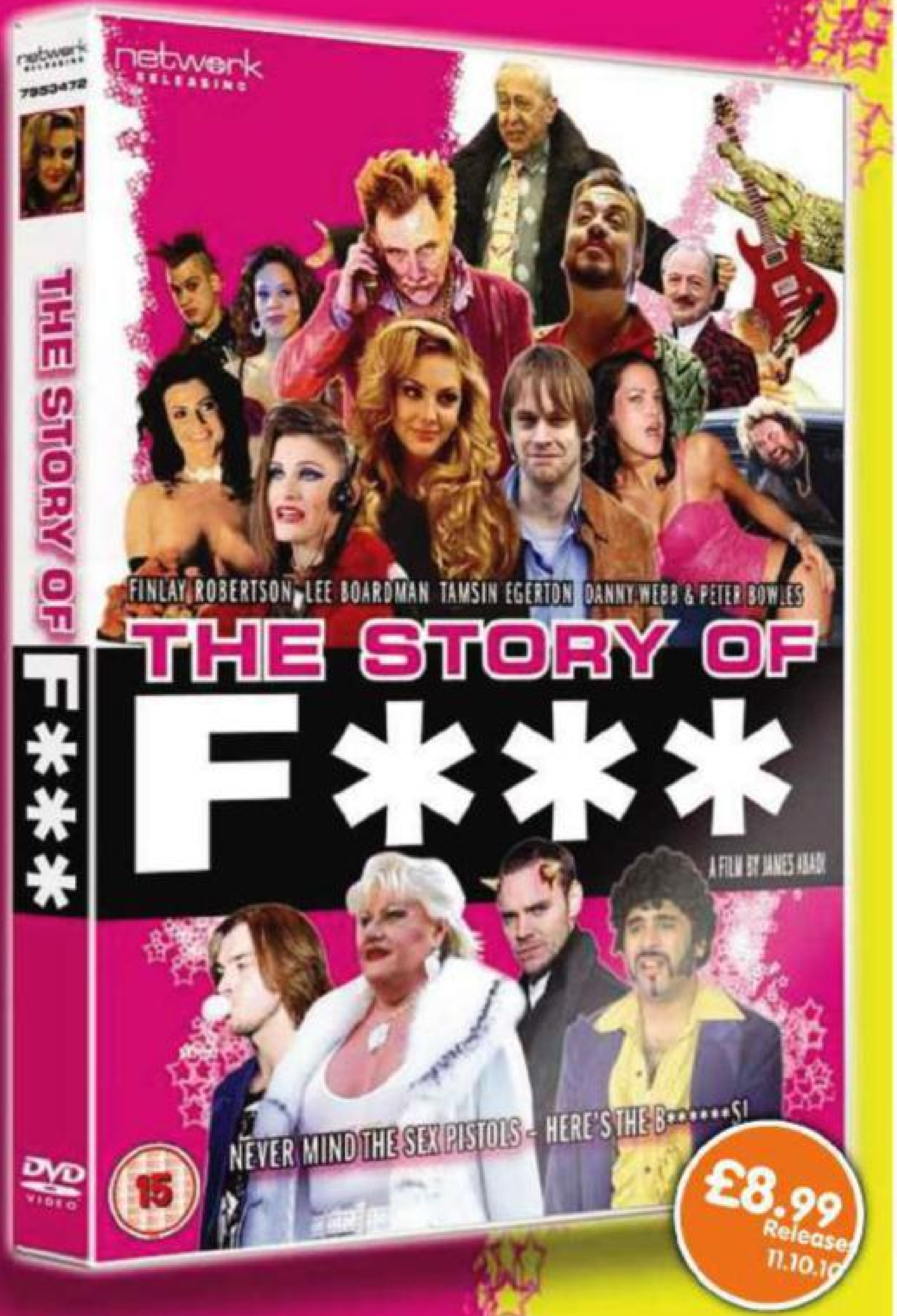
Ciaran McCauley

Go to Myspace.com/edcoxlife4land

network RELEASING

"THE MUSIC INDUSTRY IS A CRUEL AND SHALLOW MONEY TRENCH WHERE THIEVES AND PIMPS RUN FREE AND GOOD MEN DIE LIKE DOGS. THERE IS ALSO A NEGATIVE SIDE."

(Hunter S Thompson)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15
DVD VIDEO
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Release 11.10.10

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UNLEASHED ON DVD OCTOBER 11

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BIZARRE WINTER BALLS 2010 BALL

WIN TICKETS! and meet The Damned and The Tiger Lillies!

WIN tickets to the London Bizarre Winter Ball and get cosy with the stars!

WONDROUS READER CREATURES – DO YOU wanna meet some incredible screechers? Seeing as you're more precious to us than a Hobbit's solid gold ringpiece, we've arranged a truly fantastic competition for ya'll that money simply can't buy. Not one, not two, not three, but FOUR lucky, mucky pups will receive our incredible five-pronged prize. Make sure you're in it and you might just win it...

And if you win, you'll get:

- ***A pair of tickets to the hotly anticipated London Bizarre Winter Ball!*** Times four! Four chances to be a winner! That's the same number of chances as a one-armed, thumbless man has fingers!
- ***A meet'n'greet session with goth punks The Damned!*** Hang with Captain Sensible and his crew!
- ***A meet'n'greet session with vaudeville villains The Tiger Lillies!*** The surreal three-piece salutes *you!*
- ***Hugs from co-host/Bizarre writer Alix Fox!*** Mmmmmm! Nice! Foxy cuddles to get you in a muddle!
- ***The chance to hang out with your heroes!*** And see some of the best alt.entertainers on earth, dance like a loon, and take snaps of yourself with famous freaks that'll make your Facebook friends so jealous, they'll probably shit in their sneakers!

Do you want all this? *Do you?* Of course you do. Scoot over to Bizarremag.com/competitions to enter. Sadly, we can't provide transport and accommodation – winners must sort out their own jet packs and sleeping bags – but this is still a lethally good prize.

Bizarre London Winter Ball

The Bizarre London Winter Ball will also feature a gig from glam punk rockers **The Ghost Of Lemora** (their music's on *The Vampire Diaries* soundtrack, don'tcha know!). Then there's hardcore sideshow zombie cowboy **Damien S Fear**, who was personally picked by Alice Cooper to appear at his Halloween gigs, and whose stunts involve *a lot* of his own blood. Slurp.

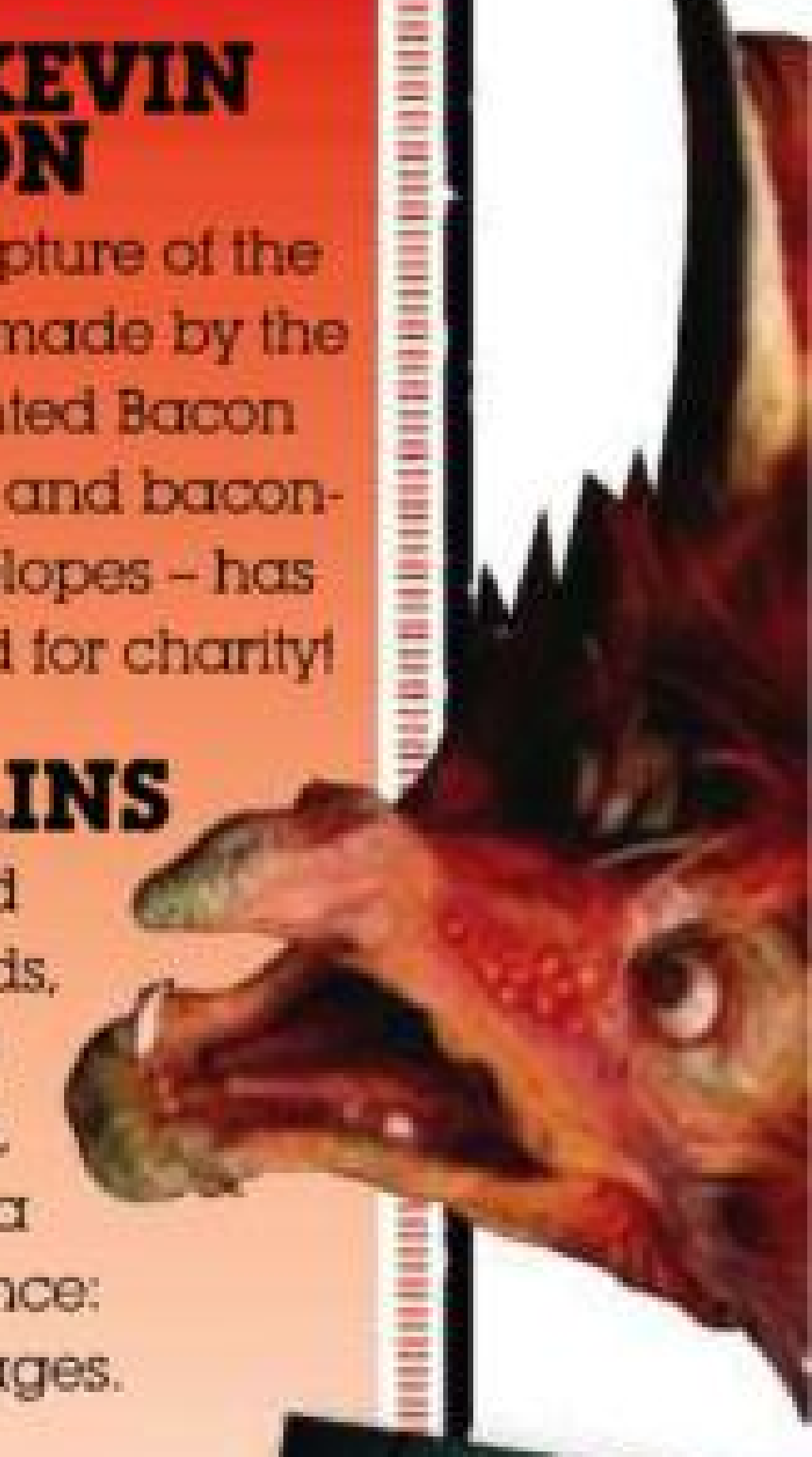
But it wouldn't be the true *Bizarre* bazaar you all know and love without freakshow godfathers **The Circus of Horrors** dangling buckets from their penis piercings, panda-eyed **Desmond O'Connor** singing ukulele songs about necrophilia and binge-eating, and DJs better than hour-long BJs. To find out more and to buy tickets, visit Bizarremag.com/bizarreball

THE GRINDER

"MMM" BACON

BACON KEVIN BACON

A huge pork sculpture of the *Footloose* actor – made by the guys who invented Bacon Salt, Baconnaise and bacon-flavoured envelopes – has been auctioned for charity!



GOBLINS

Vampires, werewolves and zombies are all massive trends, but through dangers untold and hardships unnumbered, we reckon goblins are gonna be the next big thing. Evidence: our last two Parties pages.

FUTURISTIC LIFE DRAWING

The Future Gallery, London, styled a naked model to look like an android from the future. She posed for artists who drew her on iPads, projector screens and computers. We can see this catching on at Dr Sketchy's burlesque life-drawing classes.

MINCE MEATER

WHAT'S HOT AND WHAT'S ROT THIS MONTH

PAYING FOR TATTOOS

Amputee alt.model Amina Munster recently told us that she swapped a number of her childhood prosthetic legs for tattoos, while trad-style Californian inker and music collector Talley gives money-off sessions in exchange for records.

MONTBLANC

These identical twin brothers from Japan make electro music and are on tour in the UK. Sounds cool, right? But their press release says, "The fresh vibe of MontBlanc's recordings belies their studio-based creation". Translation: They sound shit in real life.

LELO INA VIBRATOR

It's plated with 18k gold and costs £6,398. What if you buy it, then discover it doesn't make you cum? They probably don't do returns...

"UGH!" OFFAL!

PICTURES: AQUARIUS

Storemags

13 QUESTIONS

Vicky McClure

Vicky McClure is one seriously hot biscuit right now. Best known for her work with writer and director Shane Meadows, she played the title character's sister Ladine in his 1999 flick *A Room For Romeo Brass*, then went on to play Frances 'Lol' Jenkins in *This Is England*, a role she reprised in TV series *This Is England '86*. Since then, *Bizarre*'s online forums have been buzzing with readers praising both the show and Vicky's amazing acting. We caught up with her to chat about how she handled those challenging rape scenes, as well as the more laid-back topics of farting, swearing and shaven ball-sacks...

1 As Lol in *This Is England '86*, you had to act out some horrifying scenes of sexual abuse and violence. Many of our readers are asking how you prepared for these...
I'm lucky that I've never experienced rape in real life, but I was acutely aware that – because so many people have been genuine victims – it was important to me that I did those scenes justice, and accurately portrayed the severe brutality and fear. I had to take myself to a dark place to get in character. I drew upon personal bad memories of other awful situations to dredge up true, raw emotion, and listened to a lot of moving music before the cameras started rolling. In particular, I played some instrumental tracks by Italian composer Ludovico Einaudi, which are used on screen too. I had a lot of support from Shane and the rest of the cast and crew, and Johnny Harris – who plays Lol's dad and rapist, Mick – and I spent some time alone getting deep before we had to go through it together.

Below: Vicky and Joe Gilgun in *This Is England '86*

2 Acting such a scenario must have been traumatic. How did you come back down to earth afterwards?
It was emotionally destroying, and physically demanding – I was covered in bruises and Johnny accidentally broke his hand when he caught it on the hard floor while acting out a punch. Thank God he missed my face! I was sharing a flat with associate producer Libby Durdy at the time and, after I'd finished that scene, she found me lying on the floor, completely messed up. We shot it on my first day on set, so I was thrown in at the deep end. In a way that was good because, afterwards, we filmed some more humorous, affectionate scenes that helped me lighten up again. We all went out for a meal and a drink that night to laugh the day out of our systems.

3 Do people who recognise you on the street confuse you with the character you play?
Lol cheats on her lovable partner, Woody, with his best friend, and I've been shouted at in the street a few times by people who forget that *This Is England '86* isn't real! I think it must be harder for Johnny, though. His role as a despicable father who beats and attacks his own daughter was bloody hard to play, especially as Johnny's the nicest guy in the world. I bet he's glad to be able to shave that haunting beard off now. That thing should've had its own award for looking so frightening!

4 Speaking of beards, the press has been banging on about the cast's 1980s hairdos – but as this is *Bizarre*, we're going to ask for your opinion on men with pubic skinheads...
Fuck it, do whatever you feel necessary to your pubes, guys! A trim is fine, but highlighting your groin is a no-no.

5 What's the most regrettable look you've ever sported?
At school I wore Karl Kani jeans – a tacky denim brand you bought off market stalls. Nowadays I'm a muse for alt.make-up brand Illamasqua, so they make sure I don't rock any dodgy facial looks, at least! I'm a massive backer of the S.O.P.H.I.E. charity, which Illamasqua support. It's fucking brilliant to learn that *Bizarre* also plays a big part in supporting that campaign too.

Right: Vicky had to go to a "dark place" for *This Is England '86*'s harrowing rape scene

GAGGING FOR MORE *THIS IS ENGLAND*?

We interview Thomas 'Shaun' Turgoose next month, so be sure to grab *Bizarre 170* or you'll be weeping into your Mohican glue!

6 What were you like at school?
Stupid and goofy. I had a friend called Nicky who was my partner in crime, and we'd do dumb things like turn up dressed as Mary and Jesus to RE lessons, give birth to piles of rags on the floor, then kneel at our desks mock-praying. I was a doofus, always trying to entertain people. I guess it was the 'drama' in me starting to show! I was also into dancing: I auditioned for the Royal Ballet, and for a while I considered being a dance teacher.

7 Tell us about your most terrible toilet experience.
Having explosive, simultaneous sickness and diarrhoea at a mate's house when I was 14. Thankfully, the sink was close to the loo and ballet made me very flexible, so I was able to lean over and expel both substances into suitable receptacles!

8 What's your favourite swearword?
Twat. I'm from Nottingham, and "You fuckin' twat" is a very satisfying thing to spit out with my accent.

9 What's the worst thing you've ever smelled?
A friend's fart after they'd eaten at Wagamama!

10 And the foulest thing you've ever tasted?
The most disgusting food on earth is rice pudding. I despise it. A dinner lady once forced me to eat it and I threw up on her shoes.

11 You were in the comedy film *Filth And Wisdom*, directed by Madonna, who has sodding huge biceps! Who'd win in an arm wrestle between you and Madge?
Aw, you should've seen me when I met Madonna! It was in a strip club where she was auditioning pole dancers for the film. I was trying to play it cool, rummaging through my handbag, pretending to find some chewing gum so I wouldn't have to look her in the eye, because I was so in awe of the Queen Of Pop that I thought I was going to lose it! I went to her 52nd birthday party, which was a surreal moment. She's a perfectionist with a strong vision, and she's great to work with. She's also very toned – I don't exercise at all, so I think she'd take me if we arm wrestled. I'd give her a run for her money, though! We had an arm wrestling competition on the set of a short film I was in about political activists called *Enough Rope*, and I beat everyone, including the men.

12 What are your future plans?
Nothing's definite, but Shane's said that if – *if* – we make another *This Is England*, it'll centre around the 1990s rave scene, and he's also mentioned a possible Christmas special. For the first time in my career I'm able to cherry-pick the roles offered to me, which is insanely exciting. I'm so grateful to be in this position. I'd like to do something light and play a character that's not so hard for a change, and I'll also be doing much more with Illamasqua.

13 No-one can be as freakin' cool as Lol in real life. Tell us something embarrassingly sad about yourself.
I'm like an old biddy with how much I love slippers, and I have to wear them all the bloody time. My favourite is a stripy pair that my sister got me from Next. I'm also obsessive about stationary, and I get excited about fresh notebooks and buying a new diary every year. If you want to impress me, don't take me to an underground punk club – just let me loose in Paperchase!

Alix Fox

Below: Vicky and the gang in *This Is England '86*, a favourite with *Bizarre* readers

THIS IS ENGLAND '86

This Is England '86 is out on DVD now, featuring shitloads of great extras. The freakin' awesome soundtrack is on sale too

Six pages of the sexiest alt.models,
freakiest art and best body mods!

scramags.com

HOTSHOTS
>GIRLS

Our Heroes (left to right): 8 Ball, Fleur De Lys, The Canadian, Nordik, and Black Terror

HEROES OF THE NORTH

Bianca Beauchamp and her super-hot pals are here to save you from limp-dick syndrome!

***BIZARRE* COVERSTAR BIANCA** Beauchamp is currently scorching screens in a new online show called *Heroes Of The North*. It tells the tale of a group of Canadian kick-asses whose job is to protect the world from an evil terrorist organisation named Medusa, which is led by sinister Nazi scientist Dr Joseph Mengele. Bianca plays a villainous bad gal assassin called Crimson. "My character has no morals and will slay just about anyone – she goes where the money is," purrs Bianca. "She looks like Little Red Riding Hood, but her personality is closer to that of the Big Bad Wolf."

Crimson's good-looking, do-gooder enemies include the heroes Fleur De Lys, played by former UFC Octagon Girl Edith Labelle, and Nordik, played by model Vanessa Blouin, as well as some suitably muscle-bound male characters, all of whom come wrapped in rubber.

Heroes Of The North creator and director Christian Viel explains, "Skin-tight latex costumes proved a great way to get a convincing, slick, superhero look without spending thousands on leather or going down the cheesy spandex route. I didn't choose rubber specifically to please fetishists, although the plot deals with mature subject matter and doesn't shy away from representations of sexuality or violence. I'm tired of political correctness. When I originally came up with the idea for a live-action superhero series with a uniquely Canadian viewpoint, I was approached by people who wanted to turn it into a TV show, but that placed too many limits on how edgy I could be, so I decided to fund the whole thing myself and take it online."

The project has expanded, and for every five video episodes, a comicbook focusing on a particular character is released. There are two videogames planned, the first of which will come out in February 2011, and this month, a novella about Nordik was also launched. It's in the form of a journal, and includes entries spanning her formative teenage years, right up to her current baddy-whacking incarnation. *Heroes Of The North* dolls and DVDs are in the pipeline too.

We can only imagine what special features a Bianca Beauchamp action figure might have...

Heroesofthenorth.com

PICTURES: MARTIN PERREAULT, SERGIO RICO

Horny Hornet: Marie-Claude Bourbonnais:

CLUB Summat
ROBT. Wms
COOP
VanArno

'Exploration of the Subconscious on I-40' by Robert Williams (top), and life model Mynxii White posing in the catacombs (bottom)

BABY TATTOOVILLE

The exclusive annual art event that's a lowbrow fan's wet dream

As you'll already know – if you ever pay a jot of attention to this grotty little rag – *Bizarre*'s regular* 'Dark Art' columnist, Bob Self, heads up an art publishing company called Baby Tattoo. Every year, he throws a weekend-long event called Baby Tattooville, where the lucky holders of a limited number of tickets get to hang out with an all-star line-up of celebrated artists. It's nothing like meeting your heroes for a few stolen seconds at a packed-out, sweaty, convention in a hall that smells of damp Ginsters pasties; guests at Baby Tattooville get to spend whole days and nights getting to know their idols in luxurious surroundings. Everyone collaborates to create pieces of original work, discuss mutual interests and get pissed together, and there are also money-can't-buy gifts to be had.

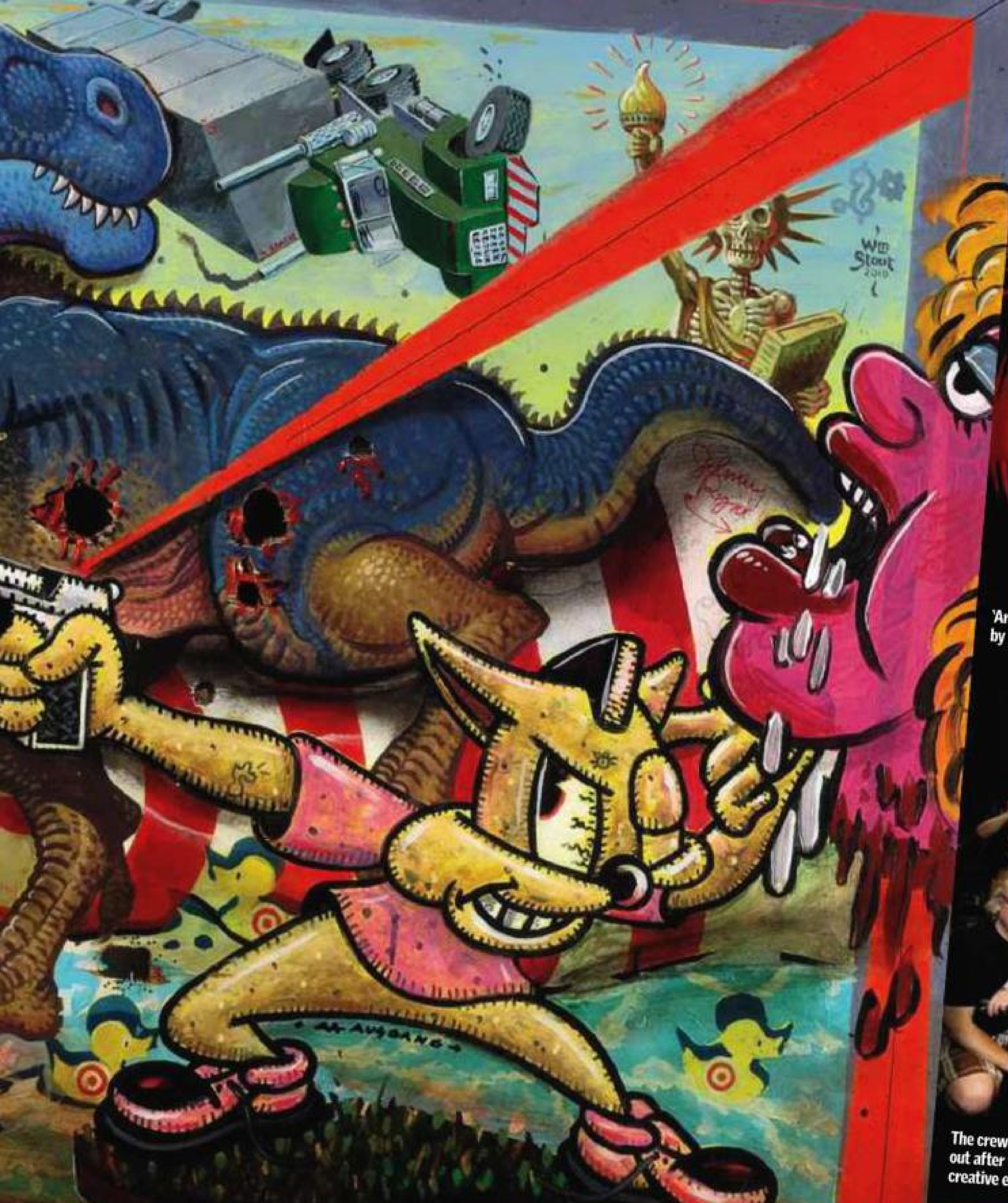
The fourth Baby Tattooville took place at the beginning of October, and Bob told us all about it, the day after the party...

Painted love

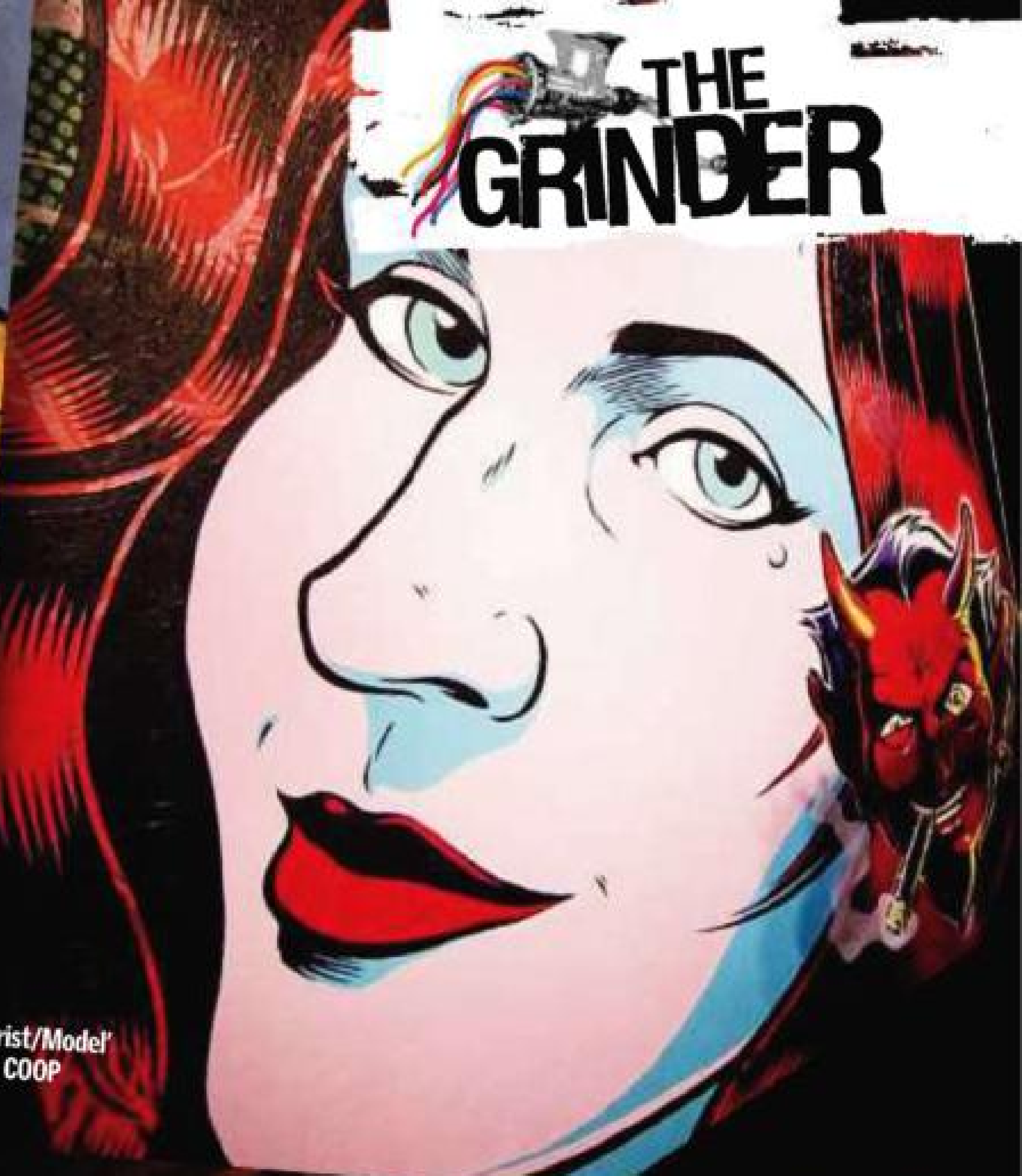
"Fuck, I'm tired, *Bizarre* readers. I haven't slept for 48 hours. I've spent the past two days and nights neck-deep in art theatrics with a secret society of top alt.artists, collectors and super-fans. We've all been holed up in a Byzantine, castle-like hotel on the outskirts of Los Angeles, and every inch of the building has been our playground: from the Escher-style stone arches and spiral staircases, to the elaborate banqueting halls – such as the fantasy-Asian 'Ho-O-Kan Room' – each alcove and secret passageway has been abuzz with makers and connoisseurs of fine art.

William Stout (left) and COOP brush up the Art-Jam

Let me paint the scene for you. Underground – appropriately enough – in the hotel catacombs, the 'Godfather of Lowbrow', *Juxtapoz* magazine founder Robert Williams, is enjoying the company of a top-hatted gentleman and a lovely nude redhead he's tied to a pillar with bondage rope. Nearby, Rick O'Brien, who built the airships seen in *Bizarre 160*, is furiously sketching the view. Upstairs, under the gaze of a giant golden Buddha, nine artists are collaborating on a brash art-jam painting, which depicts a gun-toting cat, a doomed big-rig truck, a dinosaur, Satan, and a sexualised severed head. Well, what else would you expect from cultural provocateur Van Arno, hallucinogen-inspired Anthony



The collaborative art-jam with a sexy severed head



'Arist/Model' by COOP

The crew chill out after their creative explosion

2010

Ausgang, devil promoter COOP, anti-establishment crusader Ron English, master painter Michael Hussar, filthy comic creator Johnny Ryan, nature and zombie expert William Stout, underground cartoonist Spain Rodriguez, and geometrical perfectionist Suzanne Williams?

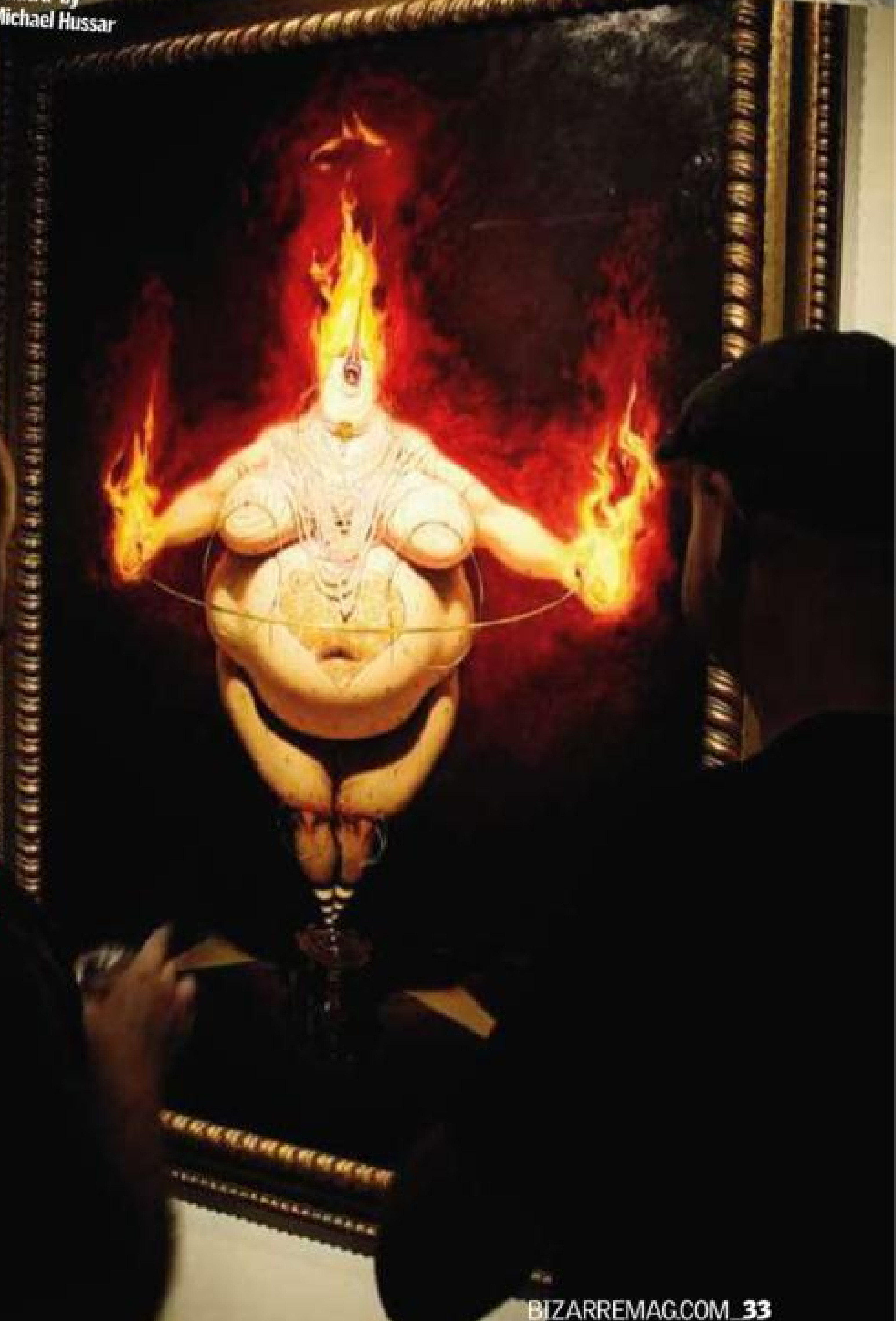
On the uppermost floor, additional 'Dark Art' favourites, including Lola and Brandi Milne, are drinking and painting late into the night, and KRK Ryden – Mark Ryden's big brother – is giving out original drawings to attendees. Down the street, in a clubby-feeling gallery at the Riverside Art Museum, a new exhibition entitled *California Kustom* presents works by all the lowbrow legends I'm sharing air with, as together we grow the beautifully freakish fruits of this weekend's surreal, exhilarating labour. It's life drawing that makes you feel alive. It's oil paint and oiled-up skin, beers, banter, beauty and brilliance. And it's my Baby. Roll on 2011"

Babytattooville.com

An undressed lady and her well-dressed friend provide inspiration

"Nine artists depicted Satan and a sexualised, severed head"

'Sing Like Sinatra' by Michael Hussar



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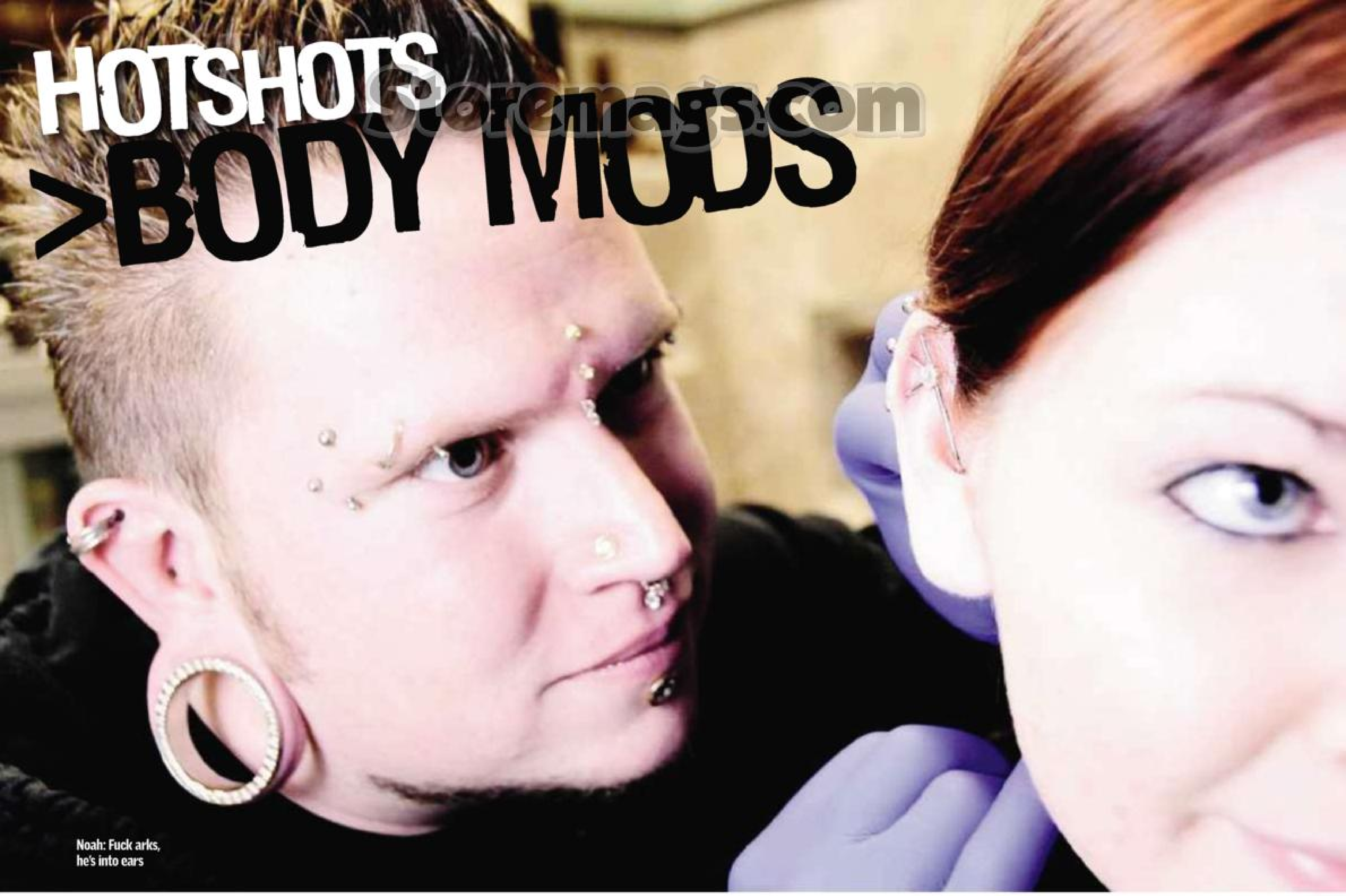
* Well, he writes for us every month. We don't know about his fibre intake.

sharings.com



Noah: Fuck arks, he's into ears

CARTILEGEND!

US body artist Noah Babcock pushes piercing boundaries with new, complex ear work

Get a lobe of these amazing ear piercings! They're the brainchild of Noah Babcock, head piercer and branding artist at Evolution Body Piercing in Albuquerque, New Mexico, USA. He's been skillfully poking creative holes in people's flesh since 1995, and specialises in advanced ear-modding and designing progressive jewellery made from gold and fine gemstones. His piercings look beautiful and fit in innovative new ways, so when *Bizarre* asked him for a chat about his work, how could he say No-ah?

Noah, Tell us about the piercings in these pictures.

They're multi-point industrial ear piercings. An 'industrial' piercing – sometimes called a 'scaffold' or 'construction' piercing – refers to any two holes connected with a single barbell-style piece of jewellery. These particular examples connect more then two holes, which is why they're called 'multi-point'.

How did you come up with the idea?

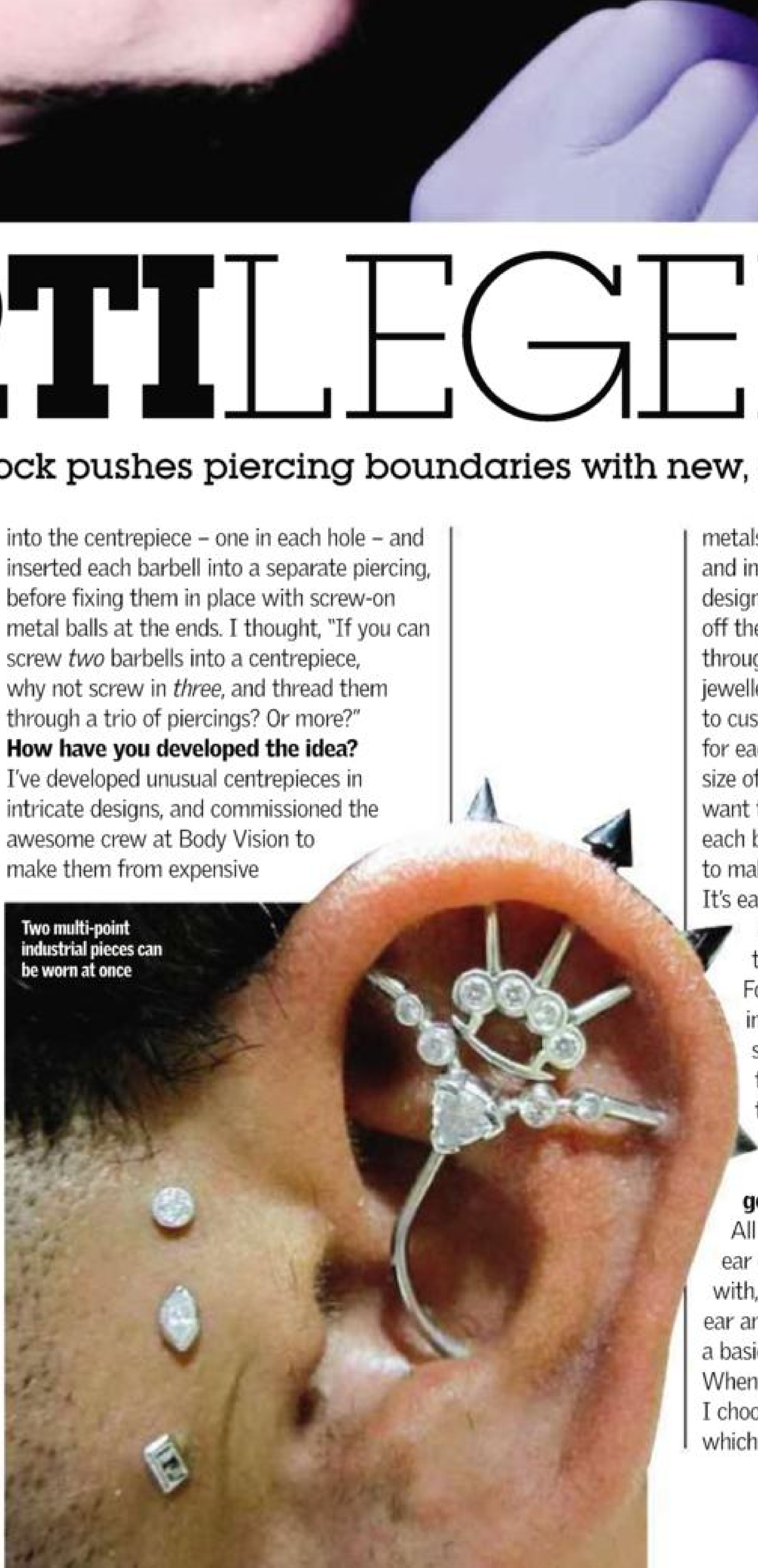
My friend Nick Martin, who owns Body Vision modding studio in Los Angeles, gave me the idea. In May 2008, he showed me some new jewellery he was using for industrial piercings. It had a decorative centrepiece with a hole drilled into either side of it. He screwed two straight metal barbells into the centrepiece – one in each hole – and inserted each barbell into a separate piercing, before fixing them in place with screw-on metal balls at the ends. I thought, "If you can screw *two* barbells into a centrepiece, why not screw in *three*, and thread them through a trio of piercings? Or more?"

How have you developed the idea?

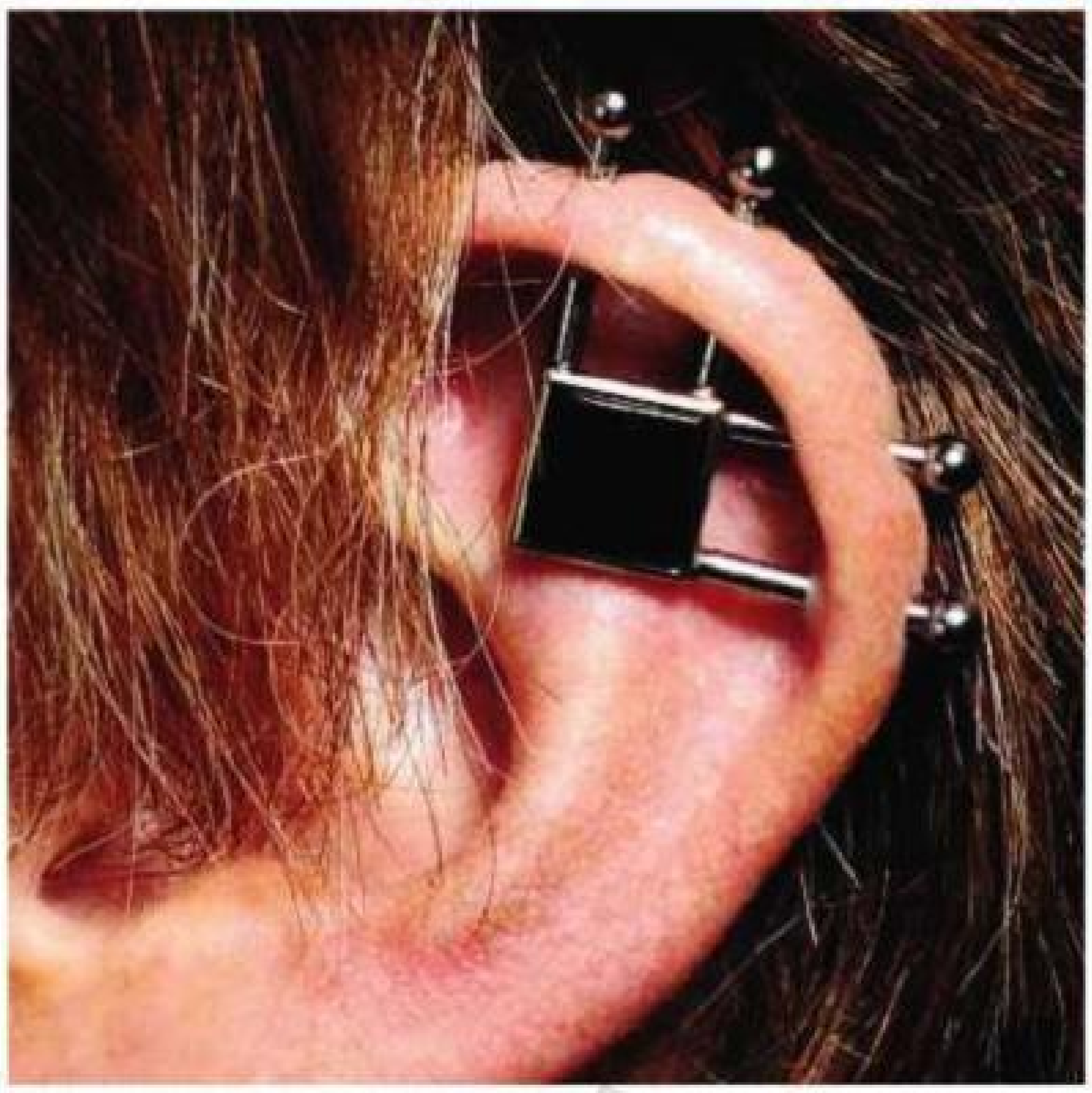
I've developed unusual centrepieces in intricate designs, and commissioned the awesome crew at Body Vision to make them from expensive metals such as rose gold and platinum, and inlay them with precious stones. They're designed to have up to five barbells coming off them, meaning that they can be fixed through the ear at five points. Because the jewellery is made of individual parts, it's easy to customise. I can choose the perfect length for each barbell I attach, according to the size of my client's ears, and the angle they want the jewellery to sit at. I can also bend each barbell to fit my customer's ear, or to make the piercing look more interesting. It's easy to change the centrepiece or the barbells to create a new look, or make the jewellery sit more comfortably. For example, I recommend that clients initially get pierced with longer barbells so there's room for their ear to swell, then switch to shorter ones once the swelling has calmed down and the mod has healed properly.

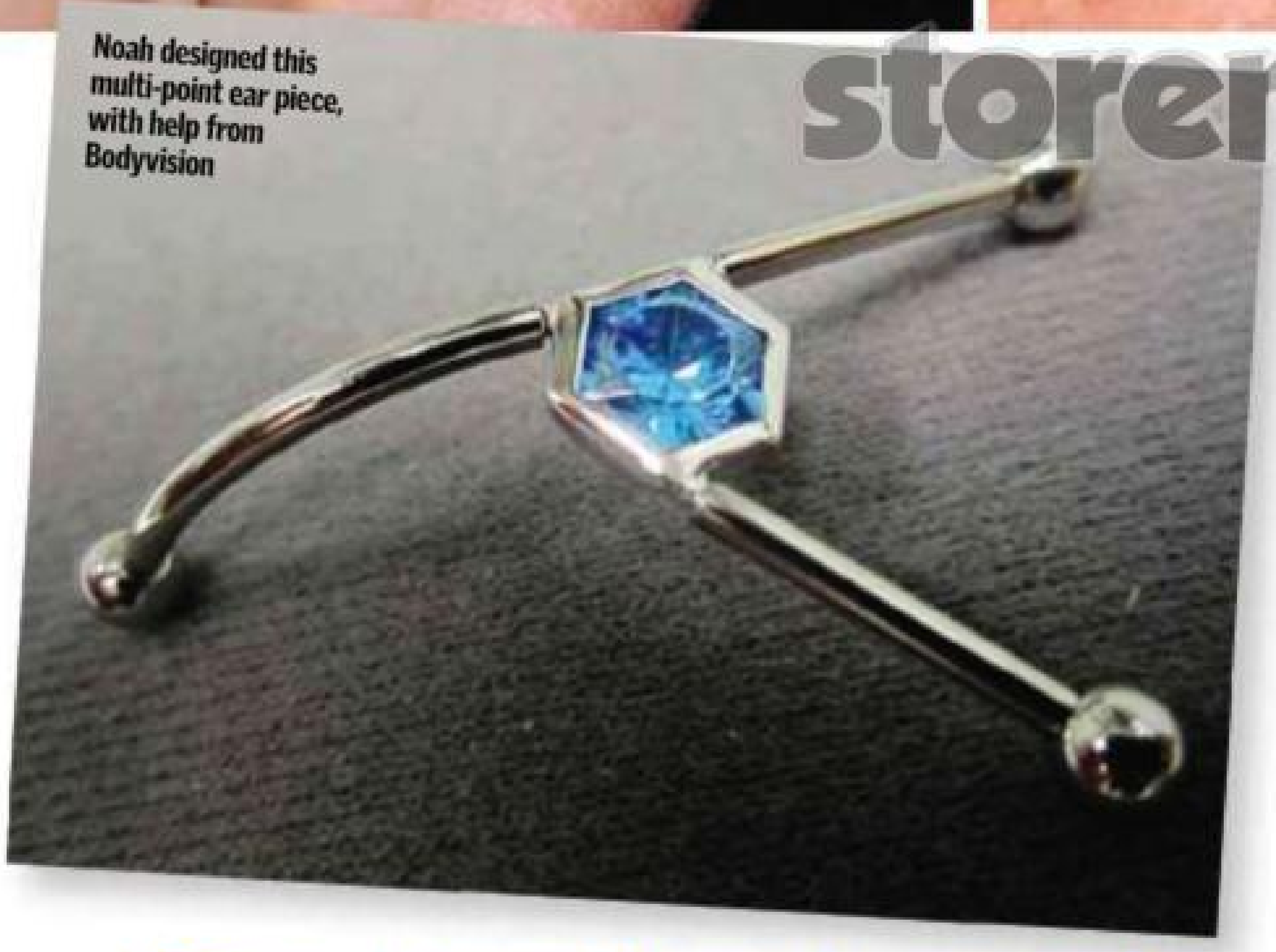
What happens when someone gets a multi-point industrial piercing?

All the holes are made in the client's ear during one piercing session. To start with, I look at the shape of the customer's ear and the jewellery they want, and get a basic vision of how everything will fit. When marking and placing the first piercing, I choose the point in my customer's ear which is most tricky to reach. Once I've



Two multi-point industrial pieces can be worn at once





Noah designed this multi-point ear piece, with help from Bodyvision

> *"The jewellery is made of individual parts, so it's easy to customise"*

made that first hole, I insert a barbell, attach the centrepiece, and allow everything to rest. Next, I look at where the threads in the centrepiece point to, then find the right angles and barbell sizes for the rest of the piercings. Everything must sit comfortably and neatly – you don't want the jewellery to tug or be too tight. The whole lot takes about three to six months to heal.

Can you get more than one multi-point industrial piercing in the same ear?

Yes! One of my favourite jobs was working on a guy with one four-point piercing in the top of his ear and a second three-pointer in the middle – that's seven pierced points in total.

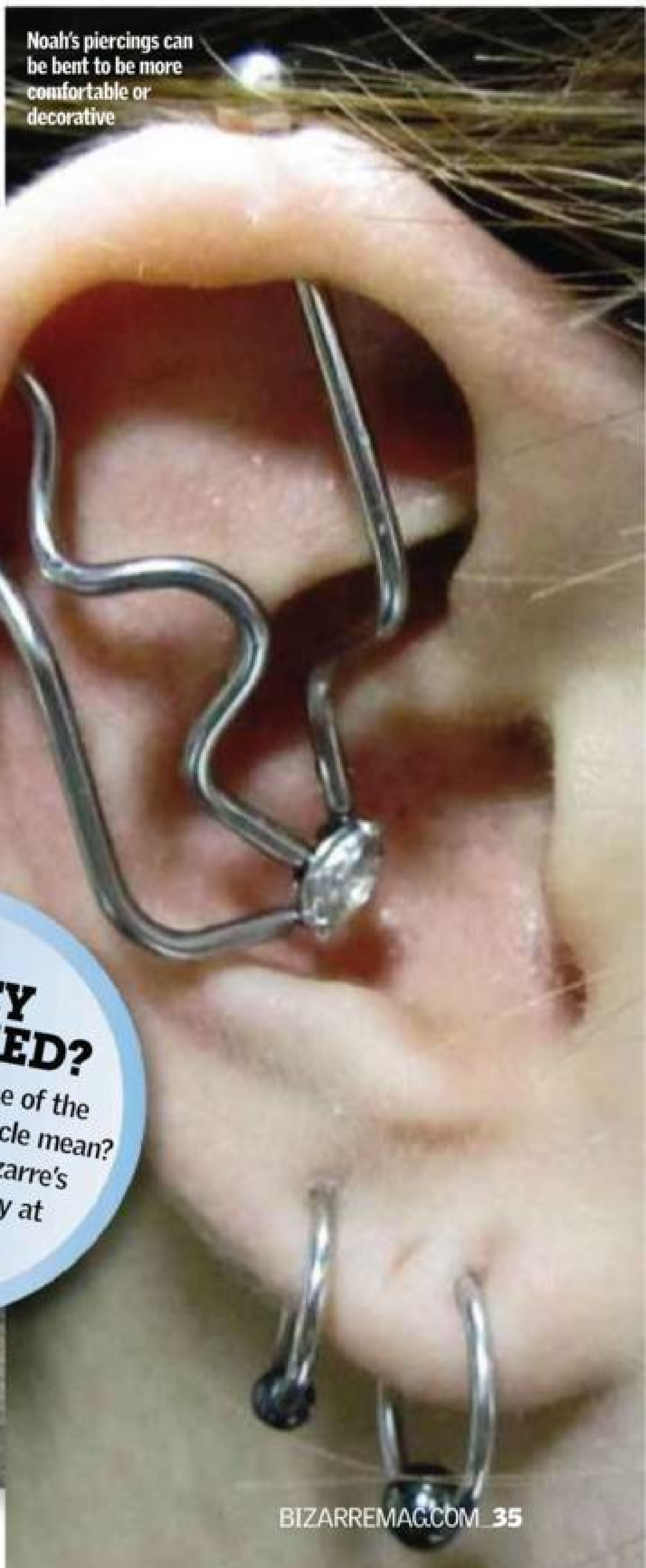
What are your plans for the future?

I'm trying to make multi-point ear industrials more complex, and I'm applying the concept to other piercings, particularly eyebrows. I'm also working on attachments that join several healed microdermals together.

You're based in the USA. How can UK readers get a multi-point industrial ear piercing without flying to America?

Readers should find a reputable, British-based piercing artist and encourage them to get in touch with Body Vision, via Bodyvision.net, or by calling 001-888-991-2639. They'll ship this type of jewellery to the UK and they're always up for discussing designs. Let's take the modding scene to new heights!

Find Noah at Evolutionpiercing.com



Noah's piercings can be bent to be more comfortable or decorative

HOLEY CONFUSED?

Not sure what some of the terms used in this article mean? Look them up in Bizarre's Body Mod Glossary at Bizarremag.com

The amputee spider had really glammed up for its date

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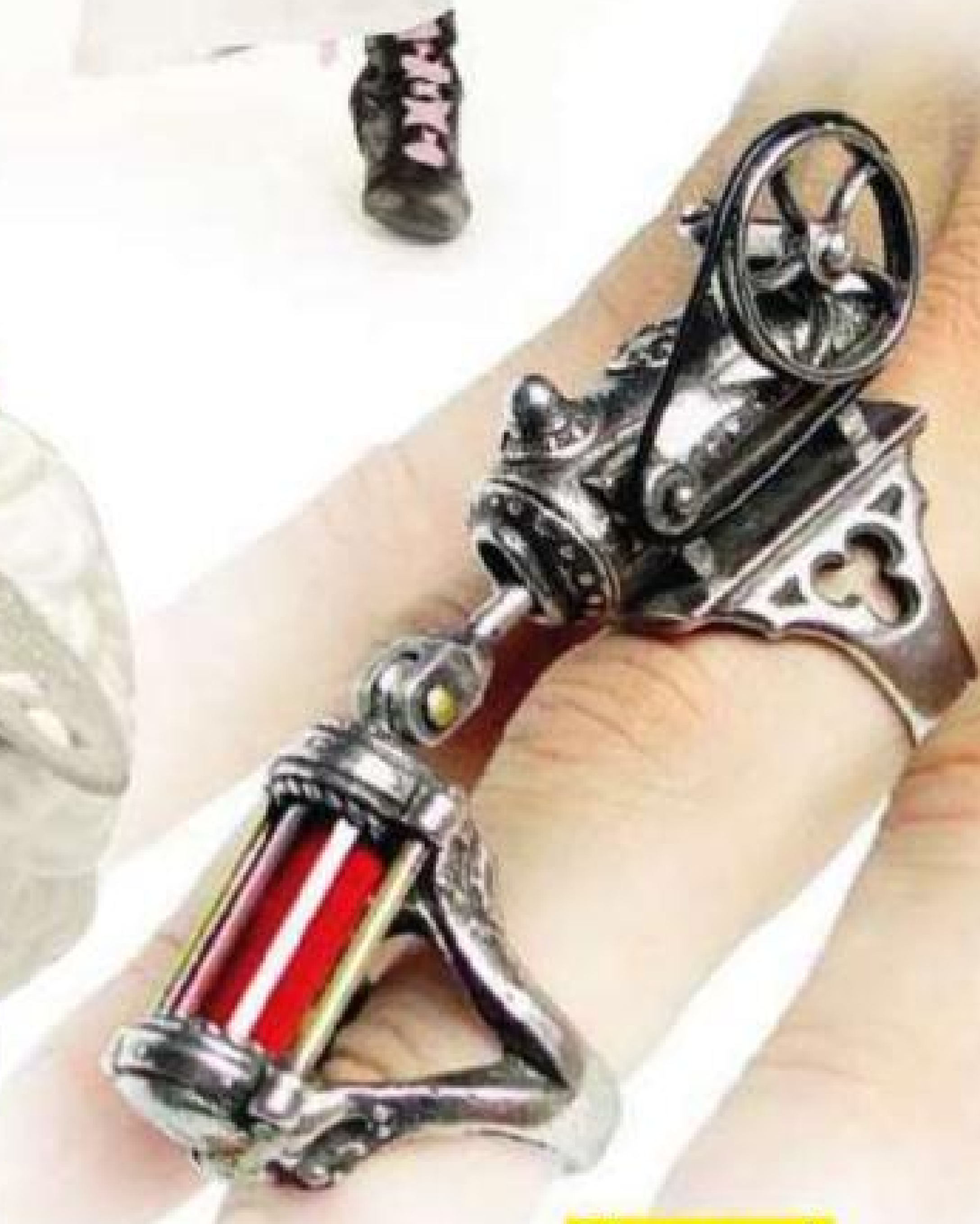

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YOURBIZARRE IN THE MAG…

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YOUR letters, pictures and ranting!

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This month's shindig is inspired by the fantasy land of 1980s flick *Labyrinth*!

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YOUR twisted creations!

50 Ultra Vixens
Vote for **YOUR** favourite *Bizarre* gals and check out the brand new Ultra Vixens website!

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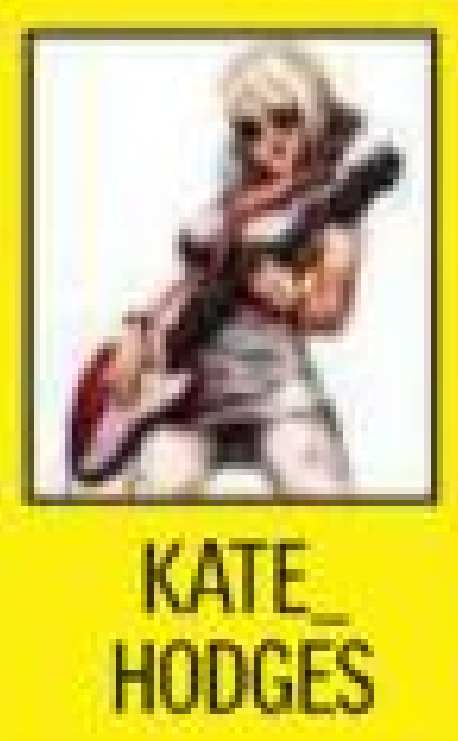

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SKULL_ SMASHER

ALIX_FOX

ELEANOR_ GOODMAN

DR_BLACK- THORN

Contact Bizarre

EMAIL AUNTIEDEN@DENNIS.CO.UK
POST BIZARRE, 30 CLEVELAND STREET, LONDON W1T 4JD
TEXT 82189* STARTING YOUR MESSAGE **BIZ LETTER**

I'M AUNTIE DEN, YOURBIZARRE'S COMMUNITY EDITOR! DON'T BE FOOLED BY MY PLAYBOY LOOKS – I'M A MEAN, LEAN, KILLING MACHINE, AND I'M HERE TO KEEP YOU LOT IN LINE. YOU'VE BEEN WARNED!

* EACH MESSAGE COSTS 25P PLUS STANDARD NETWORK RATE. FOR HELP/ENQUIRIES EMAIL MOBILE@DENNIS.CO.UK, OR WRITE TO: MOBILE DEPARTMENT, DENNIS PUBLISHING,30 CLEVELAND STREET, LONDON W1T 4JD

Attention!

Calling *Bizarre* Facebook fans!

In their infinite wisdom, the powers that be at Facebook pulled the plug on *Bizarre*'s FB page last month. Fortunately, we're back now, but we lost all our devoted fans! So make sure to 'like' *Bizarre* on Facebook again to get all your regular updates from the Greatest Magazine On Earth!

Add Bizarre at

myspace.com	facebook	twitter
MYSPACE.COM/ BIZARREMAGAZINE	TINYURL.COM/ BIZFACEBOOK	TWITTER.COM/ BIZARREMAGAZINE

PICTURES: ESTER SEGARRA

BIZARRE Junk mail

SEND US YOUR STUFF!
WE'LL TAKE ANY OLD CRAP!

EDITED BY AUNTIE DEN
AUNTIEDEN@DENNIS.CO.UK

FREE BOOZE!

SAILOR JERRY
SPICED RUM

Every month, the writer of our Dumpstar! letter wins a bottle of Sailor Jerry Spiced Rum, which will warm the cockles of the hardest of hearts!
Sailorjerry rum.com

FREAK SHOW INK!

When I heard The Enigma's troupe, The Show Devils, were coming to a tattoo convention in my hometown of Springfield, I had to see them.

My girlfriend and I thought the show was fucking hilarious, but the best bit was hanging out with the blue dude afterwards. He autographed my DVD, we shared a few beers, and he even tattooed jigsaw pieces on both my girl and me!

I'm going to try to catch him as often as I can so he can finish the piece he started on my arm.

Trever Warden, by email

This pic, and left: Trever hanging with The Enigma, and his girlfriend's jigsaw tatts

Dumpstar!

WELL DONE! YOU WIN THE BOOZE!

BUTT NAKED!

I sing and play guitar in a band called Naked Sunday. We're an acoustic folk act that sing about cheap cocaine and the struggles of midland life! We're also big fans of *Bizarre* and I wanted to send you in a rude little treat, as I recently played a gig naked at the Stafford Castle Music Festival.

The 'A' looks like a little cock poking out from his arse cheeks

This Christmas, we're releasing a single called 'Rockin' In your Stockin'', in order to raise money for people with spina bifida.

The single will be available on iTunes from 29 October, and readers can find out more at **MySpace.com/Nakedsonday**. Please give us your support!

Martin Stanyer, Stafford

P.S. *Bizarre* is a great magazine, by the way – it always gets the Mrs in the mood!

MODEL MAYHEM!

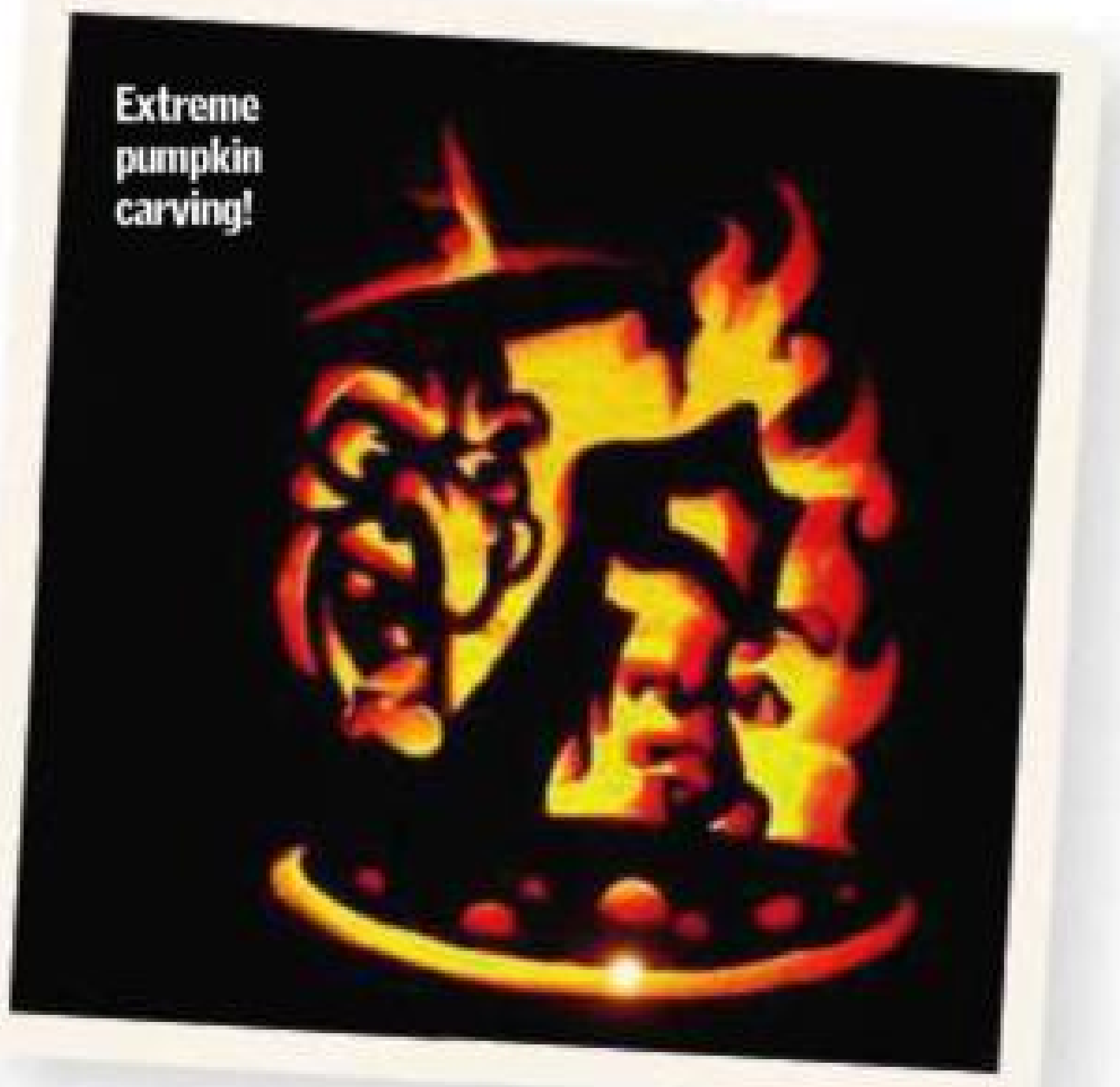
I have to say that I totally agree with the letter from Sara Bellisio in *Bizarre 168*. I was also surprised to find that all the winners and runners-up in your coverstar competition were such mainstream-looking models. Where were the BBWs, the amputees, the midgets, the chemotherapy patients, and the wheelchair-bound?

All these people and more can be beautiful too, but it seems they never got a look-in. I'm very disappointed.

Chris Appleford, by email

Auntie Den says: "There must've been a hot dog-eating contest, a one-legged race, an elf convention, a wig sale and a 2-for-1 at Kwik Fit tyres when we asked for submissions, because not one of those fuckers contacted us. Shame."

PIMPIN' PUMPKINS!



Extreme pumpkin carving!

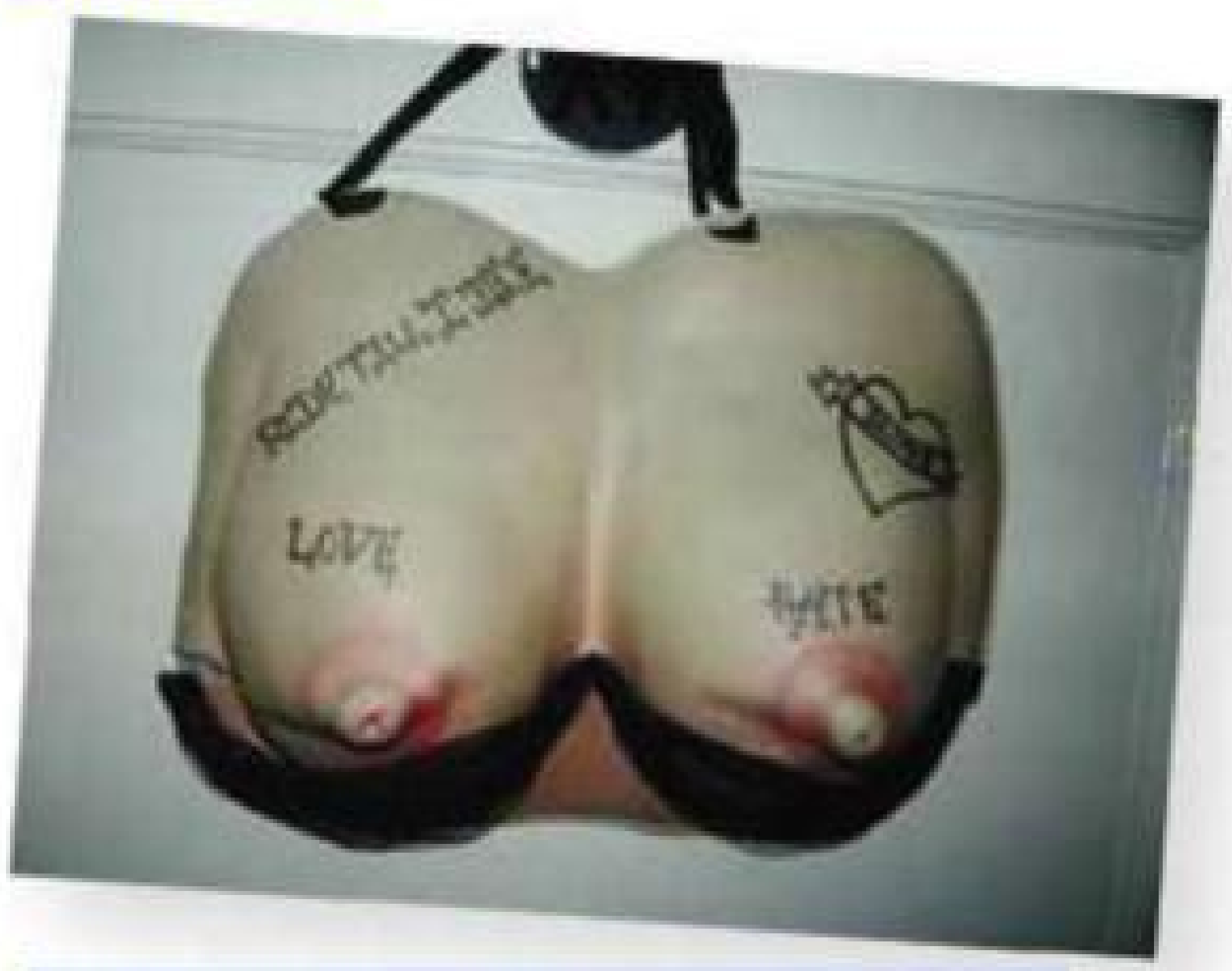
Seeing as Halloween is just around the corner, I thought I'd share my latest pumpkin carvings with *Bizarre* (above). My backyard neighbour, who always carves no less than 12 intricate patterns every year, introduced me to the craft, and I've been making my own ever since. For those who are interested in trying it themselves, I get all my pumpkin patterns from Zombiepumpkins.com.

Jeff Schmidt, Kitchener, Ontario, Canada

KNOCK-ERS OUT

I think every door deserves a knocker... or two. I hope you like mine (below)!

Oli B, by email



facebook

I just caught my grandfather flicking through this month's *Bizarre*. According to him, "it's filth, and not even good filth", which makes me love it even more!
Rebecca Evans Worsley

I do my own tattoos with the faeces of homeless people. I'm making a statement, although I'm not sure what I'm trying to say... probably "homeless poop is fun".
Jason Graver

I thought the 'Asylum Seekers' article in *Bizarre* 168 was awesome! Can we see more urban exploration, please?
Nichola Anderson

Oh *Bizarre*! You're my heroes again! More freaks, gore and sexual depravity than I've seen in a while!
Esmie Dawson

I went to the London Tattoo Convention and bumped into Auntie Den, hung out with Phil Kyle and watched Vince Ray. Man, what a day!
Amanda Coban

One of Katie's awesome pics of West Park Mental Hospital

URBAN FOX

After seeing the Cane Hill feature in *Bizarre 168*, I wanted to show you my urban exploration photos (above).

I study photography and I'm always looking for new and interesting places to snap. I've been interested in urban exploration ever since I broke into my old art college. From then on, I've been trying to find bigger and more interesting places to explore.

West Park Mental Hospital, near Epsom Common, has been my favourite place to visit. I felt a great sense of loss while exploring the hospital, but also found the place to be beautiful – which I've tried to convey in my photographs. None of my pictures are set up as I don't believe in disturbing the surroundings.

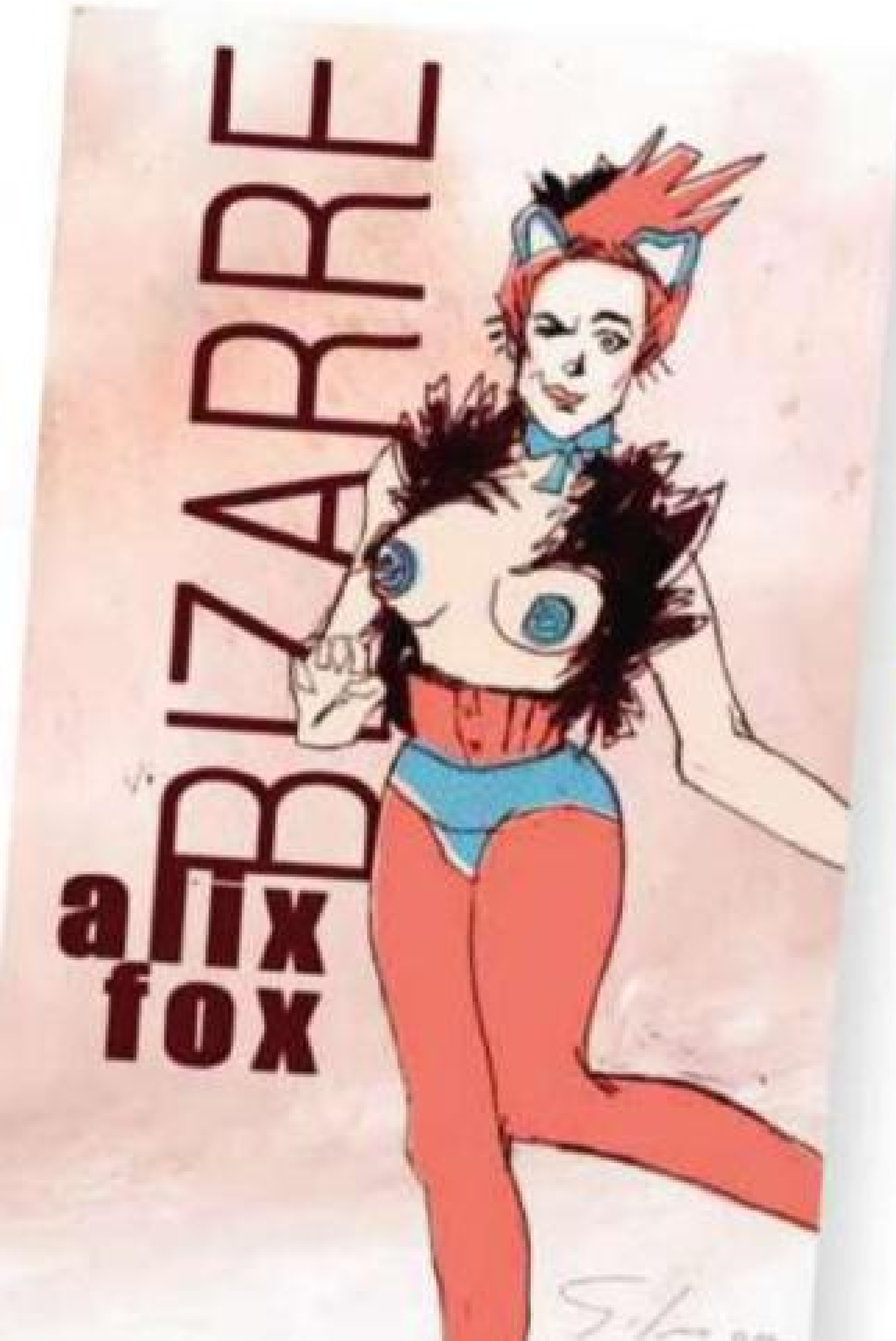
Katie Harkins, by email

ALIX ART

I recently drew this picture of *Bizarre*'s Alix Fox in her outfit from the Bizarre Ball back in June (below). It's a drawing finished off with Photoshop. I hope you like it.

Andrew Gilmore, by email

Alix says: "Wow... um... yeah... I'm speechless!" ***(NB. This has never happened since Alix learned how to talk – Team Bizarre).***

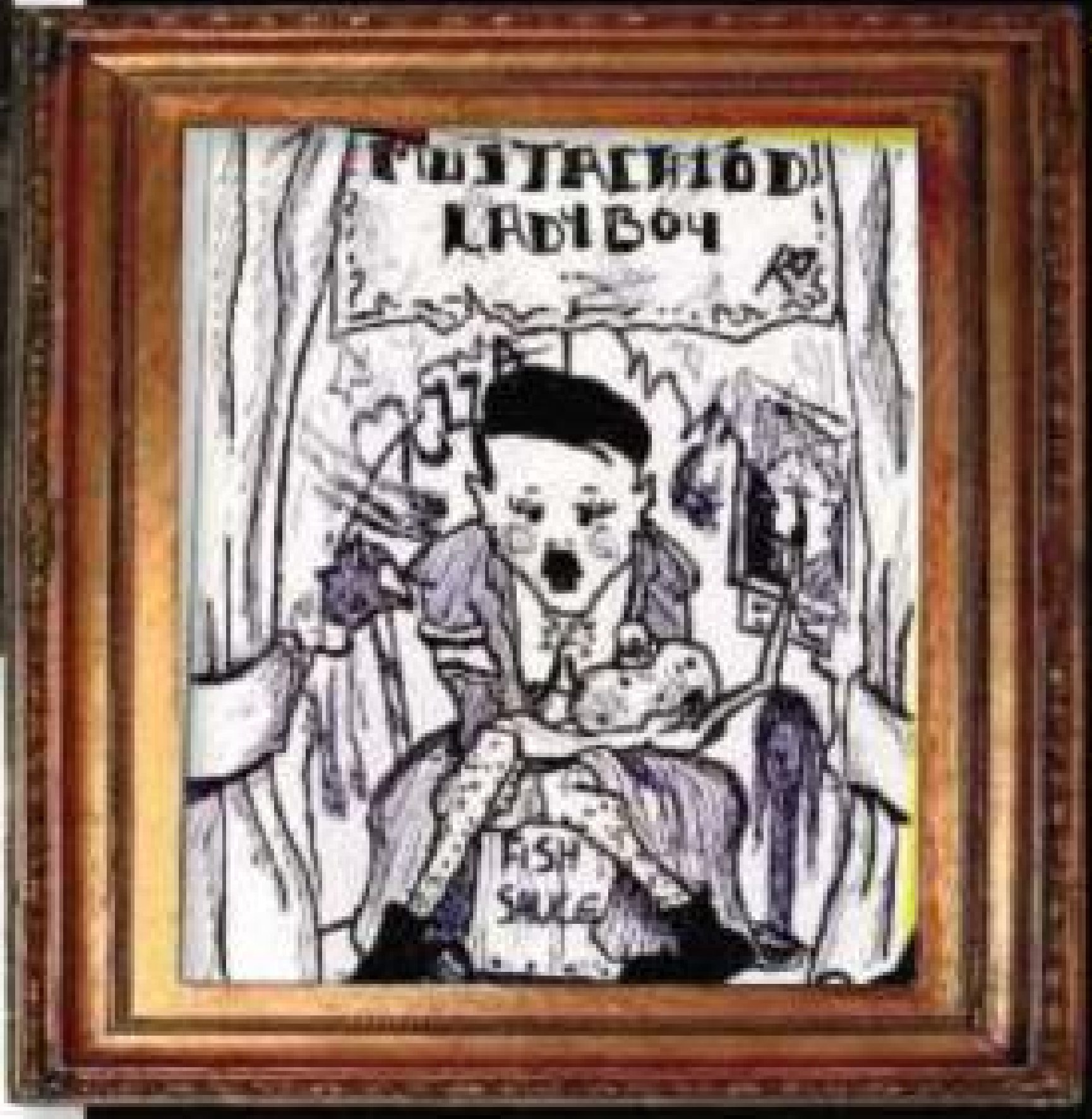

BIZARRE
alix fox

BUY CURIOUS

Everyone's a winner...

... well, not really!

In *Bizarre 167*, we asked you to send us a doodle of the freakiest sideshow exhibit you can imagine. And here's some of the twisted shit you sent us…

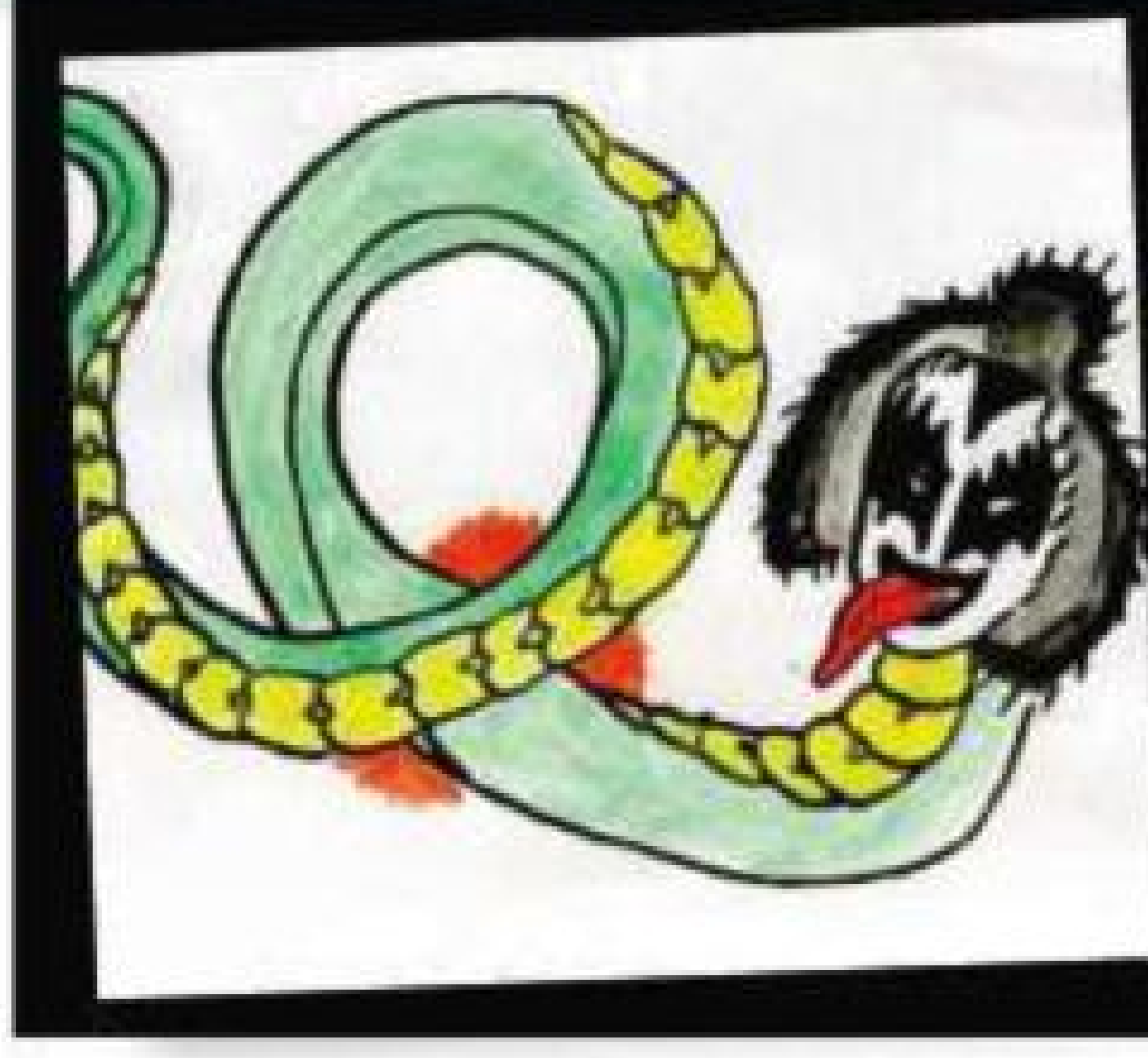

LADIBOY
FISH

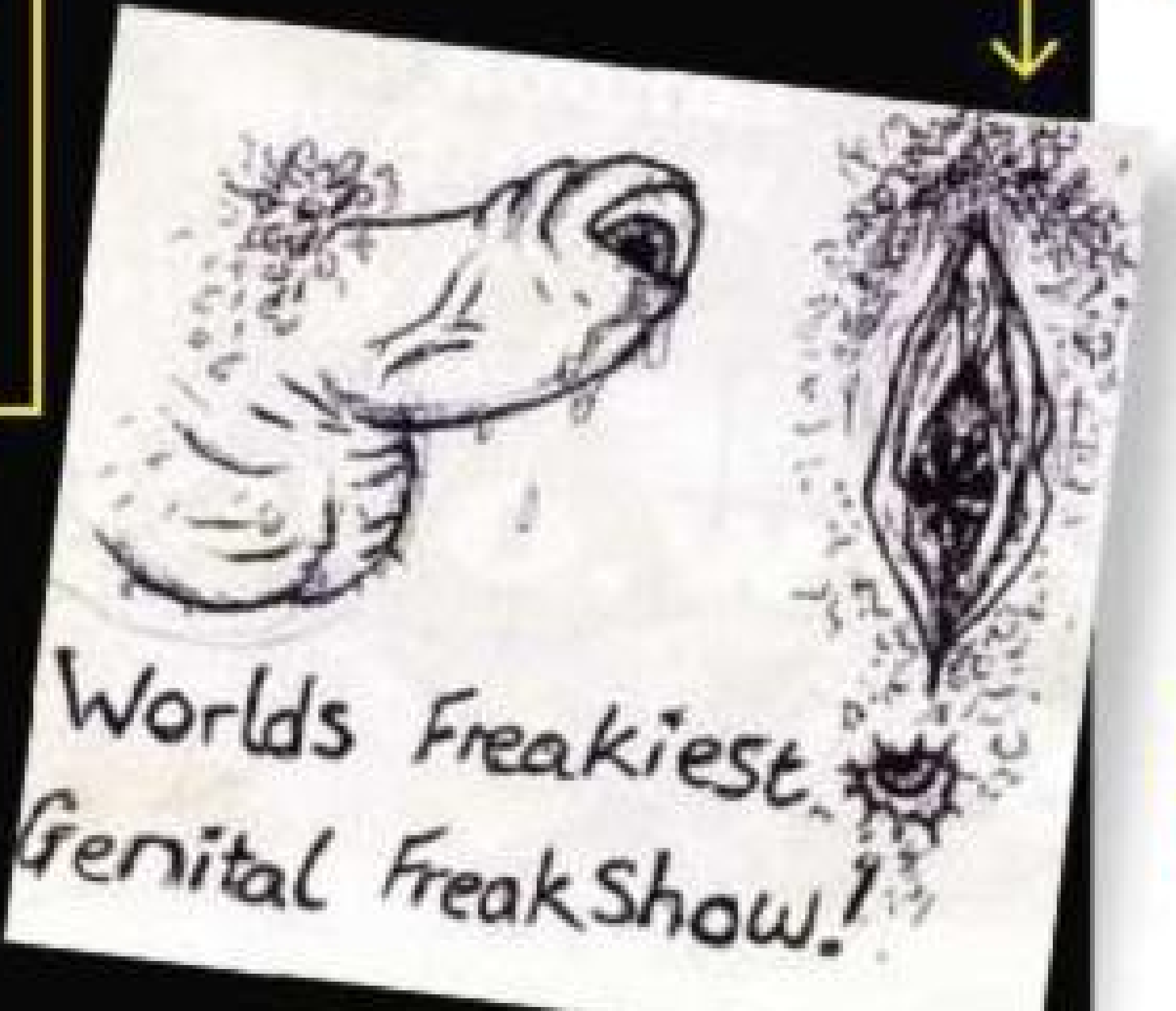
WINNER!

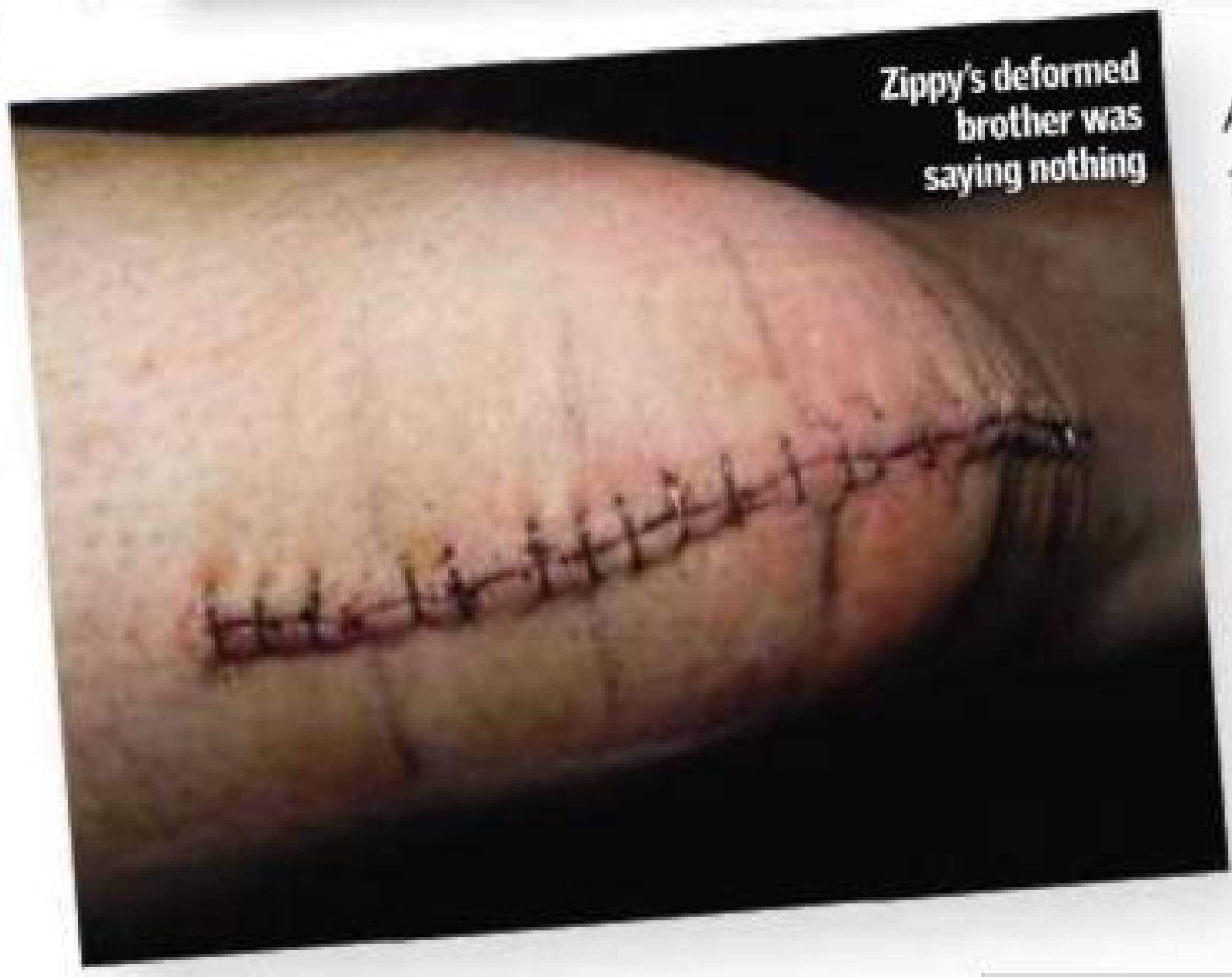
Kiel from Gorleston, Great Yarmouth won with what looks like Hitler in drag.

RUNNERS-UP

So close, yet so far for **Oliver Bach, Colchester** and **Laura Hampton, Maidenhead**. Flap your way over to p36 for another chance to wow us with your artistic arsery!




Worlds Freakiest Genital FreakShow!



Zippy's deformed brother was saying nothing

ALL SEWN UP

I've had knee problems for years, and was scheduled to have a partial knee replacement this week. On opening up my leg, my surgeon decided that replacement wasn't the best course of action and performed a 'microfracture', along with some scar filing and shaving of the kneecap to try and reduce pain levels and promote cartilage growth (see photo above).

I've had two previous operations to each knee, and if this procedure works I'll be having the same on my left knee in the not-too-distant future.

Pete Wheeler, by Twitter

Auntie Den says: Your pic reminds me of a meat pasty and now I'm hungry. Is that wrong?

INKY PINKIES

While studying the pictures of Sabina Kelley in your tiki special (*Bizarre 165*), I realised something was wrong.

After quite some time flicking from pic to pic, and even using my girlfriend to recreate said pictures, it wasn't until I wrote on her fingers that I realised – Sabina has 'HAUS' and 'WIFE' tattooed on her right and left hands, respectively. Yet, on the front cover, 'HAUS' appears on her left hand. My girlfriend and I came to the conclusion it was a mirrored image, but the tattoo read 'HAUS' and not 'SUAH' with the 'H' on her little finger instead of the 'S'.

My question to you therefore is: Was there a reason for this? I look forward to your response

DedPunk, by email

Auntie Den says: My question to you, DedPunk, is why don't you fucking try and get out more?

Er... whatever

WORRYING US THIS MONTH

I enjoy you and yours. Here's a gifts to you and for you to put in yours.

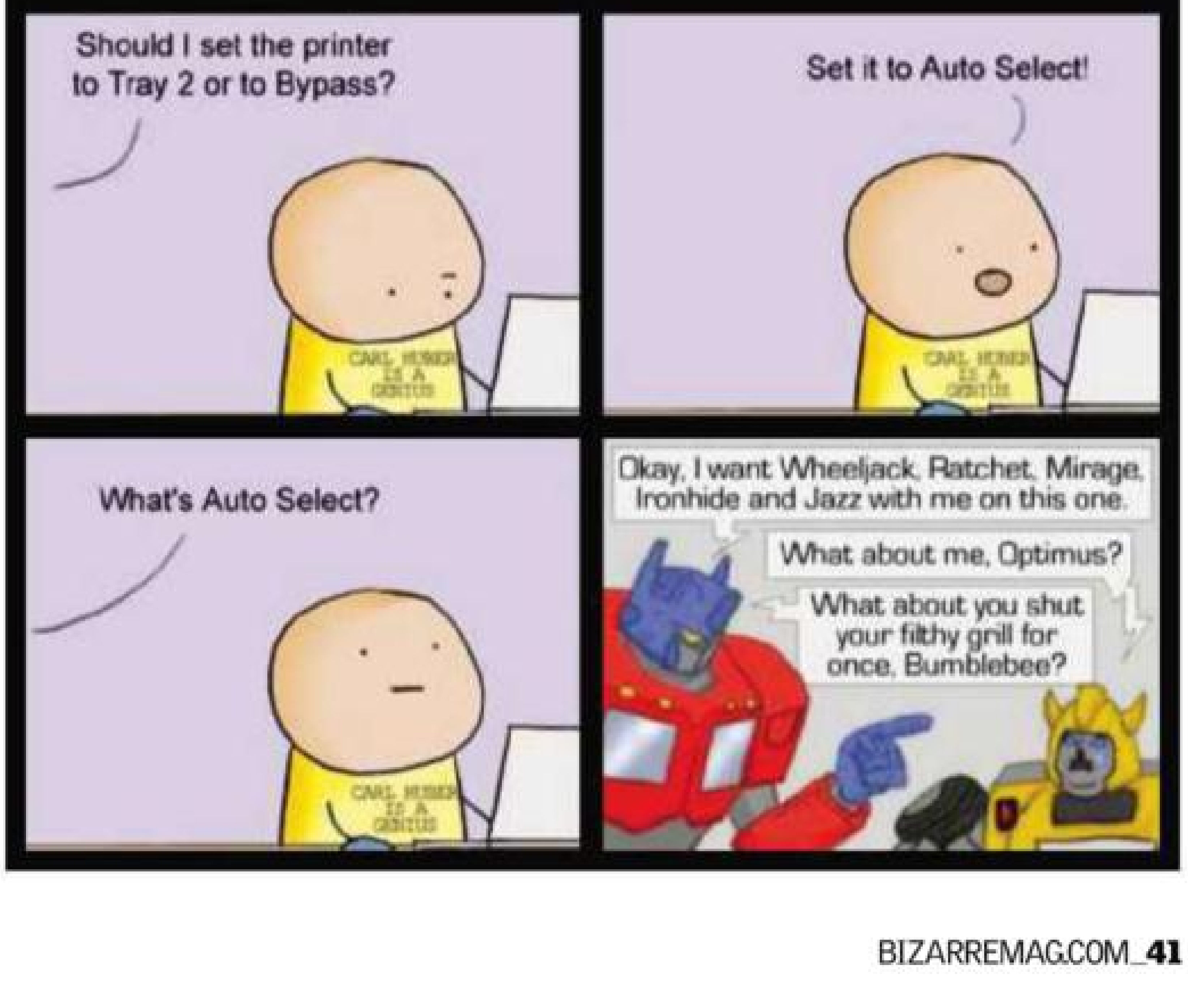
Daniel de Culla, by email

The Warehouse

By Carl Huber

WAREHOUSECOMIC.COM

REALITY CHECK


Should I set the printer to Tray 2 or to Bypass?
CARL HUBER IS A GENIUS
Set it to Auto Select!
CARL HUBER IS A GENIUS
What's Auto Select?
CARL HUBER IS A GENIUS
Okay, I want Wheeljack, Ratchet, Mirage, Ironhide and Jazz with me on this one.
What about me, Optimus?
What about you shut your filthy grill for once, Bumblebee?

SABINA PHOTO: BRIAN BROWN

proud to be different BIZARRE

Bizarre's Proud To Be Different campaign was launched in response to the death of Sophie Lancaster (right), the 21-year-old from Bacup, Lancashire, who was attacked for dressing as a goth. Contribute at Tinyurl.com/proudforum or write to us at the usual postal address (see p5). The forum is a safe place for readers to share experiences and offer support.

MAKE A DIFFERENCE

The S.O.P.H.I.E. fund stands for Stamp Out Prejudice, Hatred and Intolerance Everywhere. It raises awareness of the injustice perpetrated against Sophie and works towards a more tolerant, less violent society. To make a donation, go to Sophielancasterfoundation.com

Q+A

THE MORE THE MERRIER

Dipping a toe into the taboo of open relationships

WORDS **KATY LENNON**

Raspberry opens up about her special relationship

FOR MANY, HAVING AN OPEN RELATIONSHIP with their partner is inconceivable. It's a taboo subject in our society, with many believing you should commit to your better half for better or worse, with no third wheel involved. But for others, being allowed to sleep with others is a lifestyle choice they strive to fulfil, and these days there are all kinds of couples giving each other the freedom to have a bit on the side. One woman standing up for her right to party with third parties is YourBizarre member Raspberry. We asked how she makes it work for her.

Tell us about yourself and your relationship.
I'm a mum of four with a pretty hectic personal life and I also work – I'm a busy burlesque performer. I'm married to Carl; we've been together for eight years and married for six. We have a really strong relationship. Carl's the first person I've ever really been in love with and the first person I've ever really believed was in completely love with me, which gives our relationship a strong sense of security and absolute assuredness.

Is this your first experience of an open relationship?
Very much so! I don't think I could've done this in *any* of my previous relationships. I wouldn't have been able to accept my other partners being with other people, because I didn't have the security that I have with Carl.

How did you broach the open relationship topic?
We started seeing other people about two years ago, as we were both a bit more insecure when we first met. It started around a time I felt fed up with life in general. I got a bit intimate with a close friend, and

was deciding whether to have an affair, but I didn't. Then Carl and I discussed things and felt we needed more excitement in our relationship. I've got a huge sexual appetite. We met up with another couple and single guys, and we're both bisexual, so it gave us the chance to explore that side of ourselves.

What happened the first time you met a sexual partner without your husband?
We'd been trying to meet with a particular guy and it hadn't happened, but one day he contacted us on the off-chance and asked if we wanted to meet up. Carl was feeling poorly, but he said that I should go and meet this guy by myself. I wasn't keen but Carl insisted – we'd been talking to him for a while, so he wasn't a complete stranger. So I went. When I came home and told Carl all the details, he didn't feel jealous.

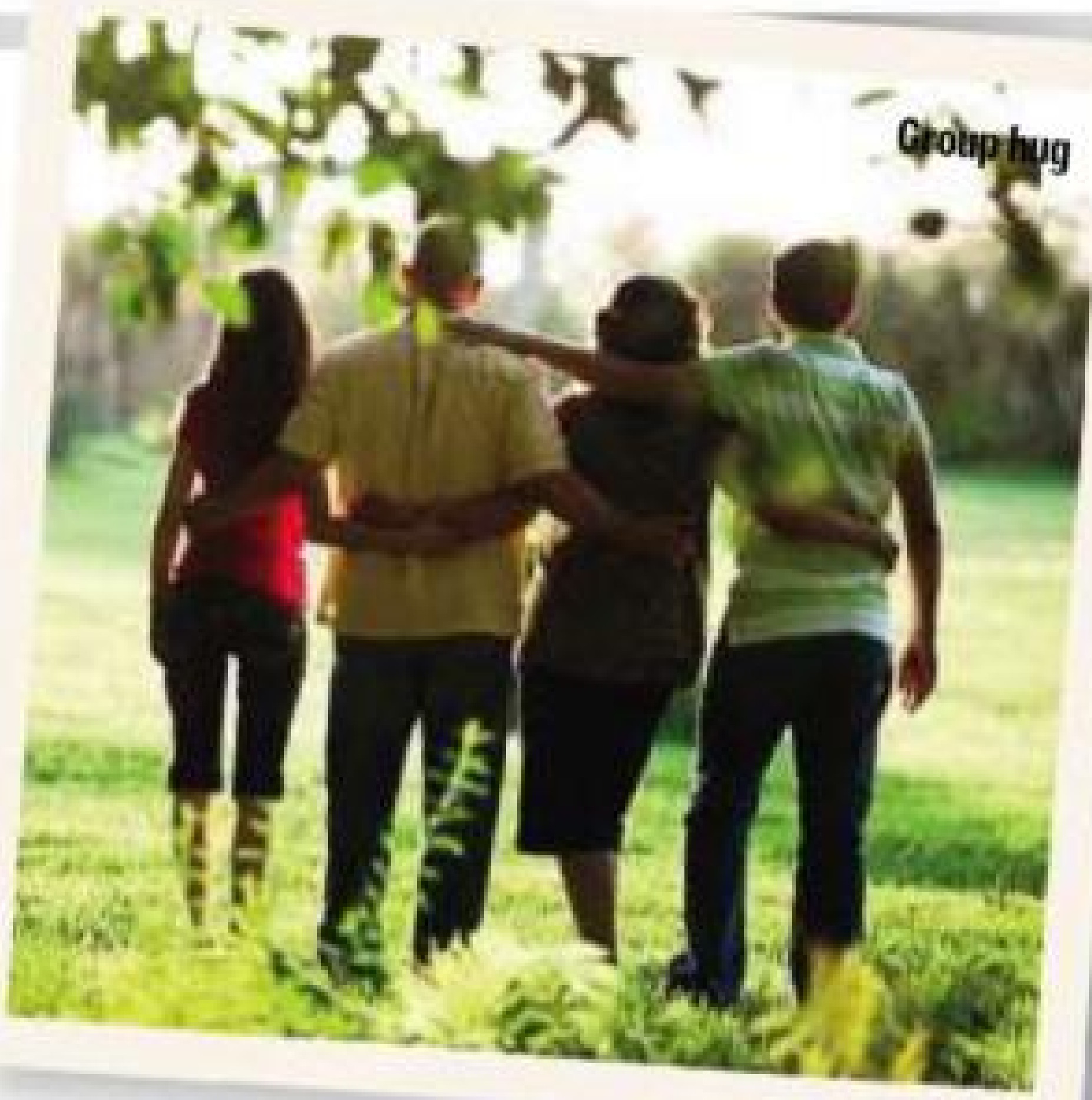
What are your ground rules?
We've got limitations, of course, such as: Always use protection, no meeting with married people unless their partners know, and always give the other person details of who you're meeting and where you're going. I think both Carl and I would become quite upset if one of us went out for a meal or went to the cinema with somebody – anything like an old-fashioned 'date'. For us, it's purely sexual. The absolute must is that we're completely honest. Otherwise it wouldn't work.

How do you juggle this type of relationship with being parents?
We don't make that side of our relationship part of our children's world. Most *adults* don't understand, so I wouldn't expect the children to. Having kids sometimes makes it awkward to meet up with people because of juggling babysitters. We won't have people back to our house if the children are here, but being a burlesque dancer means that sometimes I travel or stay away overnight, so the children are used to me being away.

What advice would you give a couple interested in starting an open relationship?
Make sure you talk it through. Discuss all the possible rules and boundaries, and think about what you're prepared to do, and what you're not prepared to do! Always be absolutely honest, because the moment there are any secrets, the arrangement becomes something different. Just be sure that you both want this and that you're secure enough in your relationship. That's the most important thing.

THREE'S NOT ALWAYS A CROWD

Advice from a professional with real-life experience


Group hug

Not only has therapist Grant Denkinson worked with couples who are in open relationships, he's in one himself...

“There are lots of ways of conducting relationships and open ones certainly aren't for everyone. Some people seem much happier being monogamous, or find monogamy best for them at some points in their lives. For others, an open relationship would seem to fit them best.

"For me, it's getting a goodnight text from a lover I'm seeing next week, before snuggling in with another partner. But the common misconception is that our lives are a constant shag-fest – and that there's hours and hours of 'emotional processing' conversation. My advice to any couple is: yes, you need to talk a lot, take it slowly and treat everyone involved with respect, but most of all: have fun!”

Are you in an open relationship? What do you think about it? Write in and tell us your views! Email AuntieDen@dennis.co.uk

SAMARITANS

Samaritans has become the official charity partner of Proud To Be Different!

HOW CAN YOU HELP? There are 201 branches of Samaritans in the UK and Republic of Ireland, and volunteers are contacted more than five million times a year by people in emotional distress. In order to maintain a 24-hour service for its callers, the charity needs to raise more than £10m every year. To make a donation to Samaritans call **08709 00 00 32** or visit ***Samaritans.org***

SHOW YOUR SUPPORT

proud
to be
different
BIZARRE

BUY *BIZARRE'S* PROUD TO BE DIFFERENT BADGE AND HELP STAMP OUT PREJUDICE

Buy yours for just £1 and pledge your allegiance to our Proud To Be Different cause. The profits from each badge will be donated to the S.O.P.H.I.E. charity, which is dedicated to working towards a more tolerant, less violent society.

To get yours, visit Backstreet-merch.com/stores/bizarremag.
To find out more about the S.O.P.H.I.E. fund, check out Sophielancasterfoundation.com

NEXT MONTH!

BIZARRE 170
ON SALE
23 NOVEMBER

PICTURE: CORBIS OUTLINE

MOSH!

OUR MILKY-SKINNED ALT.GIRL TALKS **SEX, SIN** AND HER **LOVE OF LATEX** EXCLUSIVELY FOR **YOU!**

PICTURE: ZACK CANEPARI; ALT EXCLUSIVE

THE DOLL FACTORY!

WHEN SCULPTURE GETS SAUCY... THIS ARTIST'S 'RUBBER DOLL' PROJECT BECAME **A SEX INDUSTRY SUCCESS!**

"I'VE A LOT OF FRIENDS IN PRISON!" FILMMAKER **JOHN WATERS** ENTERTAINS ***BIZARRE*** IN HIS BALTIMORE HOME

PLUS!

THE WORLD'S MOST **AMAZING PHOTOS!**
BIZARRE'S **HOTTEST READERS!**

Storemags

Parties

HMMM, SMELLS LIKE FAIRY JUICE

The Goblin King's Court of DisOrder

WORDS **DENISE STANBOROUGH**
PHOTOS **MARCUS T**

DETAILS

VENUE: The Cavernous Troll Chambers under London Bridge
DATE: 18 September
WEB: Guerrillazoo.com/goblin-kings-court-of-disorder

THE LABYRINTH OF JARETH XIII party in Los Angeles (*Bizarre 168*), had everything from long-eared elves to a man dressed as a bush. Well, anything the yanks can do, us Brits can do better. And you don't need more proof than these colourful pictures snapped at the biggest goblin event since Madame's held a blowjob-themed night.

An evening of hilarity and mischief unfolded in the catacombs beneath London Bridge; a fairy spilt her drink and an ogre lost his cloakroom ticket, but the most spell-binding part was seeing the event's special guest, artist and conceptual designer of *The Dark Crystal* and *Labyrinth*, Brian Froud.

If that isn't enough to make your horns quiver, Bizarre Ball favourite Joe Black was court compere – gin-addled and characteristically cheeky. And eerie identical twin musical duo, The Henry Brothers, serenaded the crowd with lovely little ditties about killing. The rest was a blur of cabaret, naughty nymphs, skin-spearing, and fire-breathing. Honestly, a night like this could be bad for your elf.

SEE MORE PICS ONLINE AT BIZARREMAG.COM

Froud Goblin and **Ludo** paint the town green.

Sadie Q of Twisted Circus with **Katie B** "It's impossible to have a bad hair day at the Goblin Ball"

Amy Morel-Berthier "Any event where I need false ears is the place to be!"

Joe Black "There are so many princesses – if I were a dragon, I'd have a field day!"

WANT US TO PHOTOGRAPH YOUR PARTY?
Email
Your_Bizarre@dennis.co.uk,
or text 82189*, starting
your message
BIZ LETTER

Helene
"Be careful what you play with tonight. Nothing is as it seems"

Goblin Hunters from the Island Of Pankos
"No blades, no bows, no enchanted weaponry, or you shall not pass."

Big Grey
"Let them all burn!"

May LustReality
"I'm living the *Labyrinth* fantasy as a fetish pixie"

Anne von Bengard
"This place is utterly mystical!"

Chi Chi Revolver and **Sam Oliver** challenge *Bizarre* to a stare-out

* EACH TEXT MESSAGE COSTS 25P PLUS STANDARD NETWORK RATE. FOR HELP EMAIL MOBILE@DENNIS.CO.UK, OR WRITE TO MOBILE DEPARTMENT, DENNIS, 30 CLEVELAND STREET, LONDON W1T 4JD

YOUR Body Art

READER TATTS AND BODY MODS

London Tattoo Conventioa

WORDS **DENISE STANBOROUGH**
PHOTOS **ESTER SEGARRA**

DETAILS

VENUE: Tobacco Dock
DATE: 24–26 September
WEBSITE: Thelondontattooconvention.com

ANOTHER YEAR, ANOTHER London Tattoo Convention – and what a corker it was! As demand for needlework increases, the convention expands. This year there were rooms brimming with top-class tattooists and more treasures than you could shake a hand-tapping stick at. It was an event of titanic proportions!

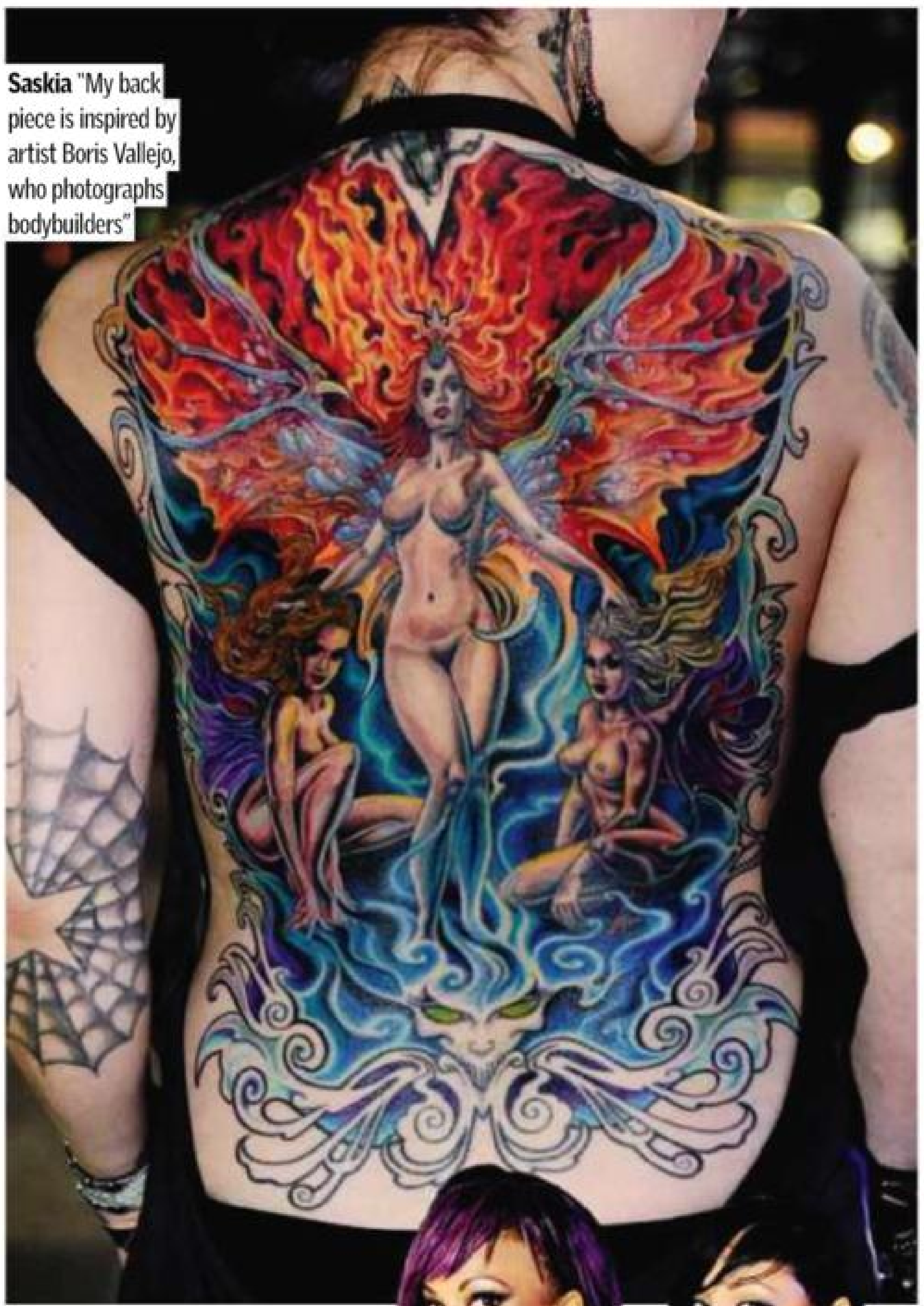
Dropping anchor and keeping the weekend afloat were Vince Ray And The Boneshakers, who rattled more vertebrae than a thousand tatt machines. Meanwhile, 'Tattoo Hunter' Lars Krutak exhibited a beautiful selection of the photos he's collected over the past 15 years, during his around-the-world tattoo fact-finding mission. Graffiti Life Collective, a group of renowned artists who promote the art, produced a huge tattoo-infused masterpiece, and Ultra Vixen Jesse Lee gave us the first peek of her new calendar, which shows her incredible inky bits in all their glory.

Many punters seemed much more brazen than before, with more neck, hand and face tattoos than we've ever seen at the event.

Also in attendance were Mo Coppoletta from Exmouth Market's The Family Business, dark tattoo maestro Robert Hernandez from Spain, Uncle Allan from Denmark, and Bugs over from the USA – not to mention a whole bundle of other bloody ace inkers from across the globe.

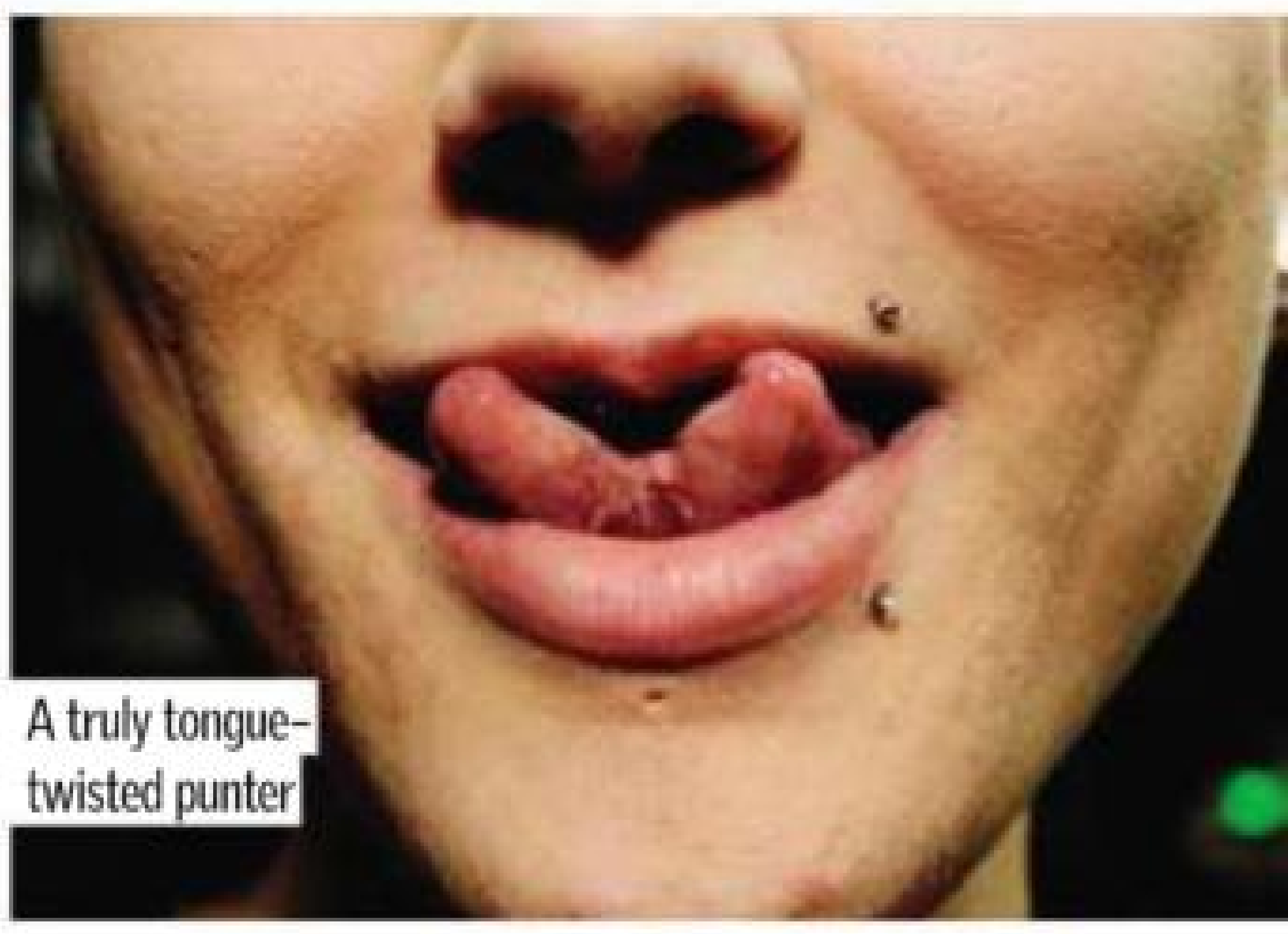
But it seems only fair that the number one tattoo event in the world pulls out all the stops and spoils us. It's why we keep going back each year, and why we can't wait to see what they have in store for us in 2011.

More pics online at Bizarremag.com



Saskia "My back piece is inspired by artist Boris Vallejo, who photographs bodybuilders"

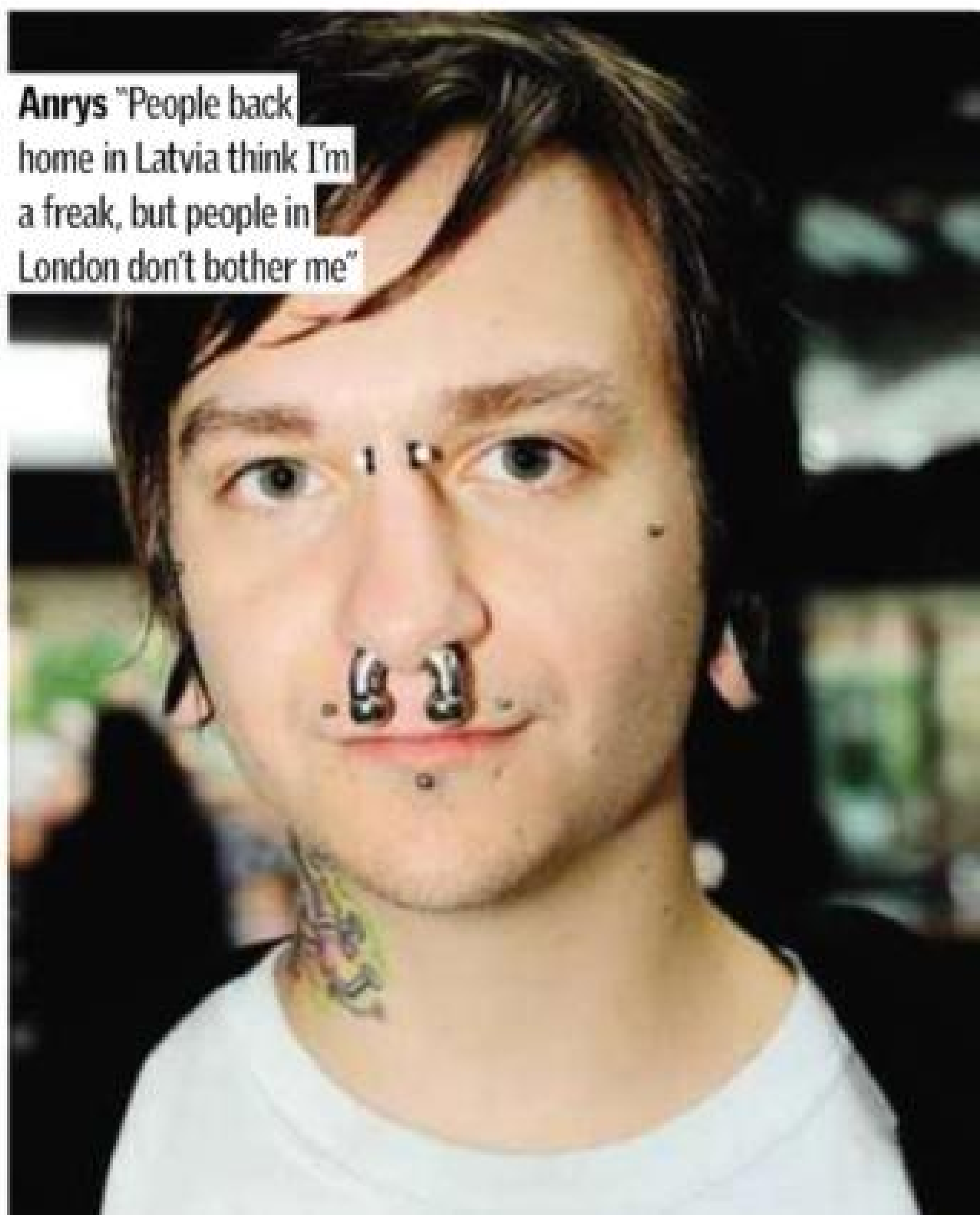
Patricia Santana "I'm a real vampire and a suspension artist – I love it"



A truly tongue-twisted punter

Kimberly "Making robots is my passion"

The Fuel Girls make us see double in the Sailor Jerry bar



Anrys "People back home in Latvia think I'm a freak, but people in London don't bother me"

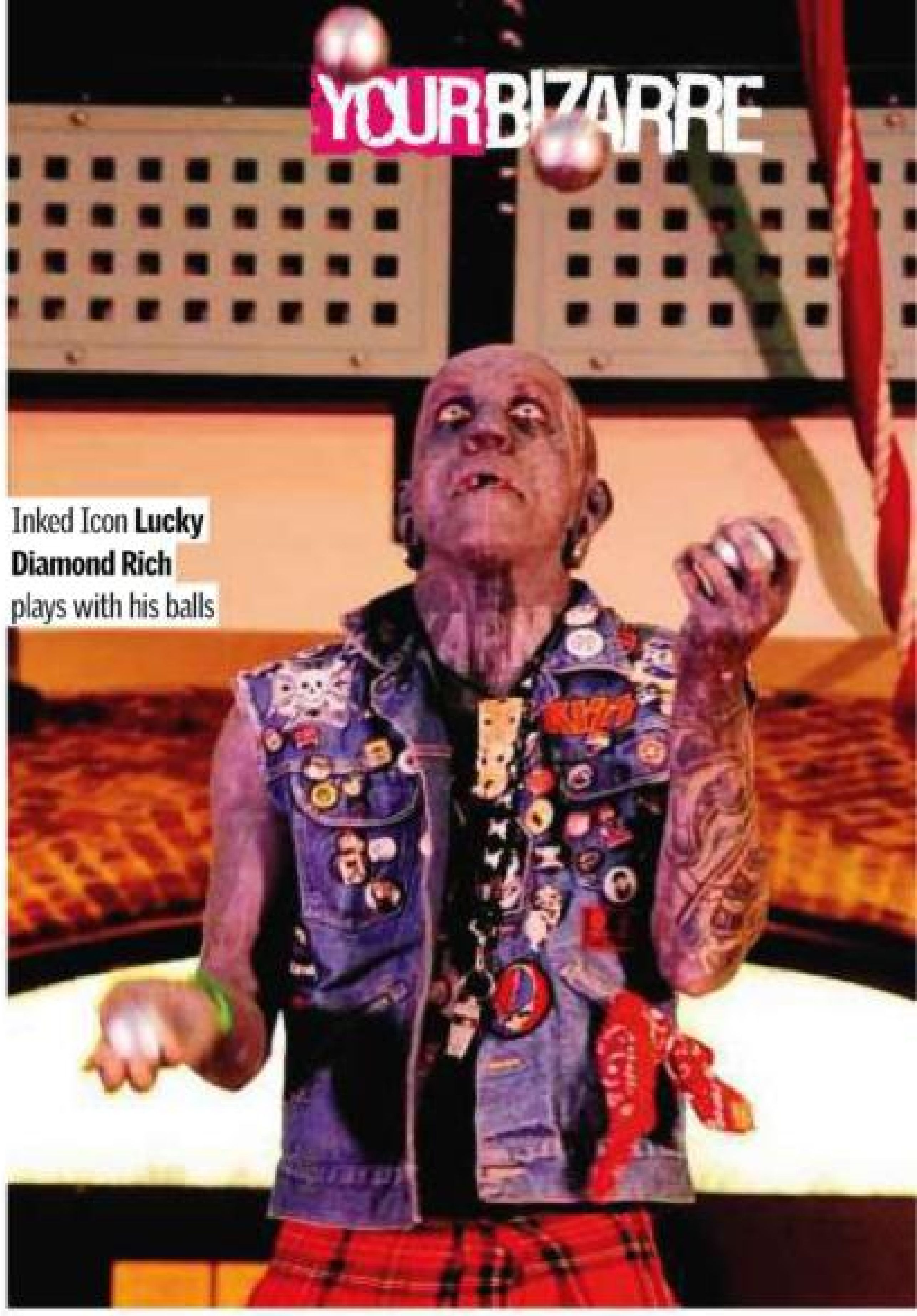
sharemags.com

SHOW US YOUR BODY MODS!

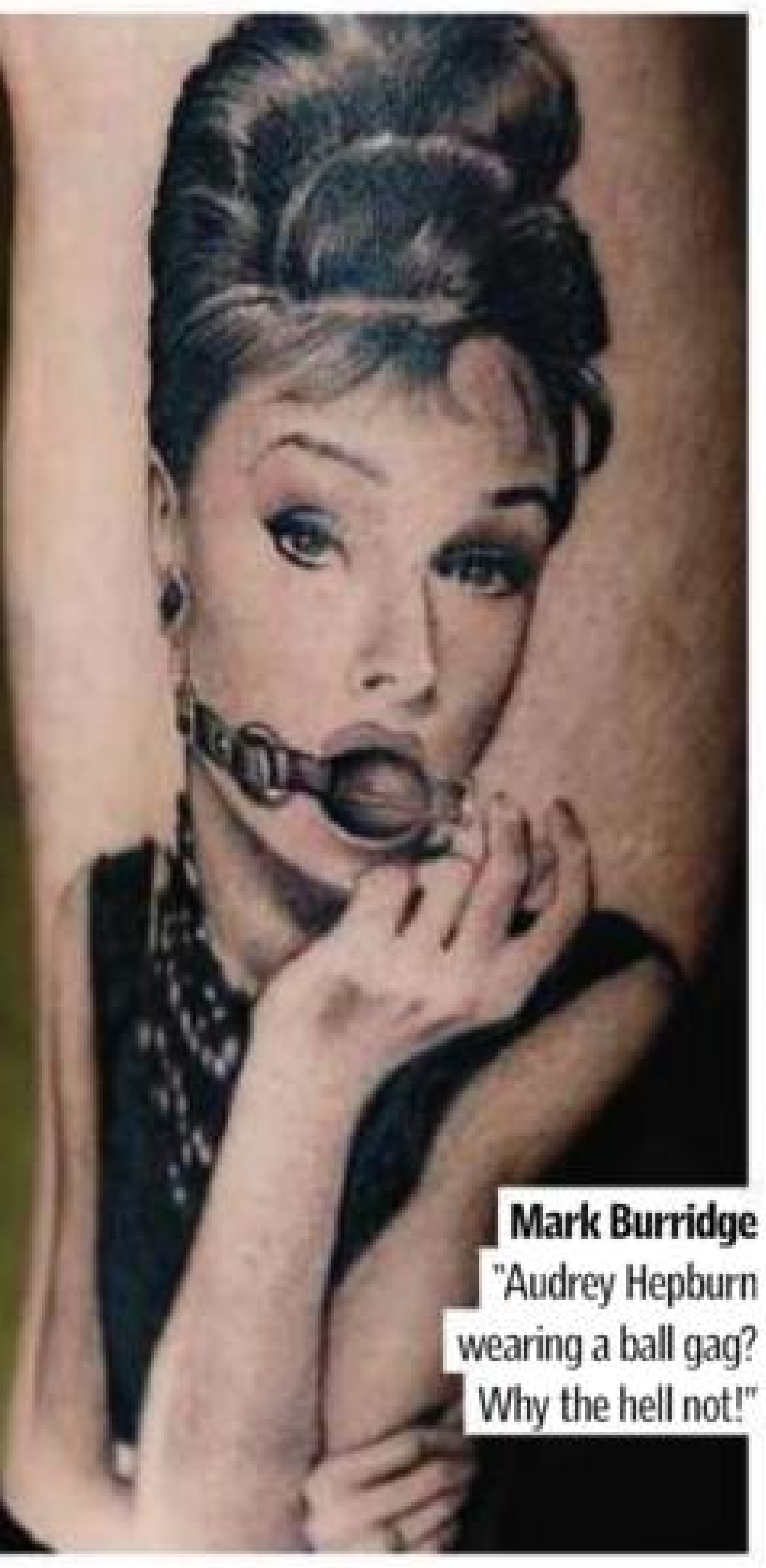
Send us pics of your tatts via Bizarremag.com or email **AuntieDen@dennis.co.uk**. The best ones will make it into the magazine!

Natalie "People are shocked at how dark my ink is, because I'm so pale!"

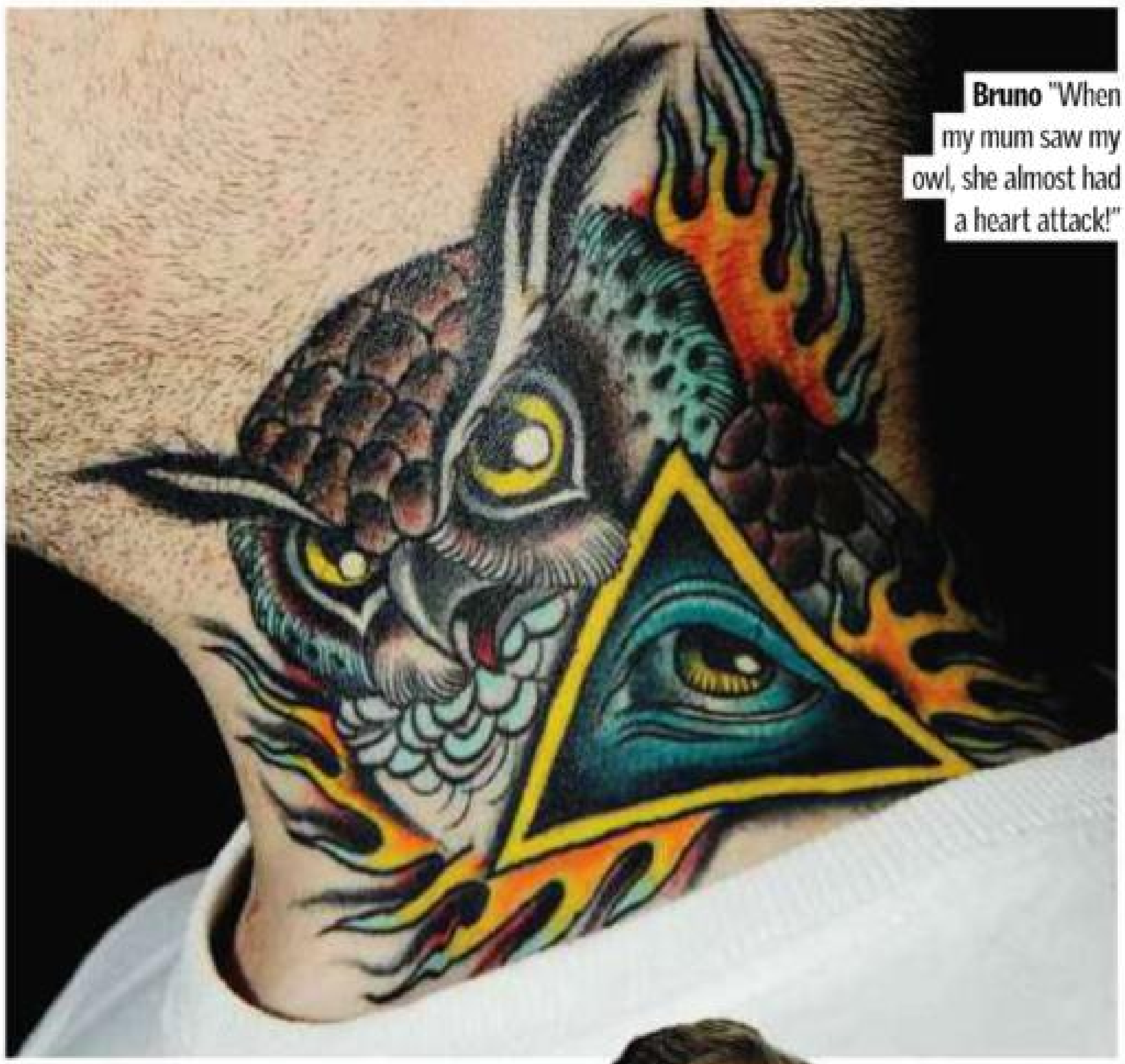
Sam "I don't like girls much, so I added some gore"



Inked Icon **Lucky Diamond Rich** plays with his balls

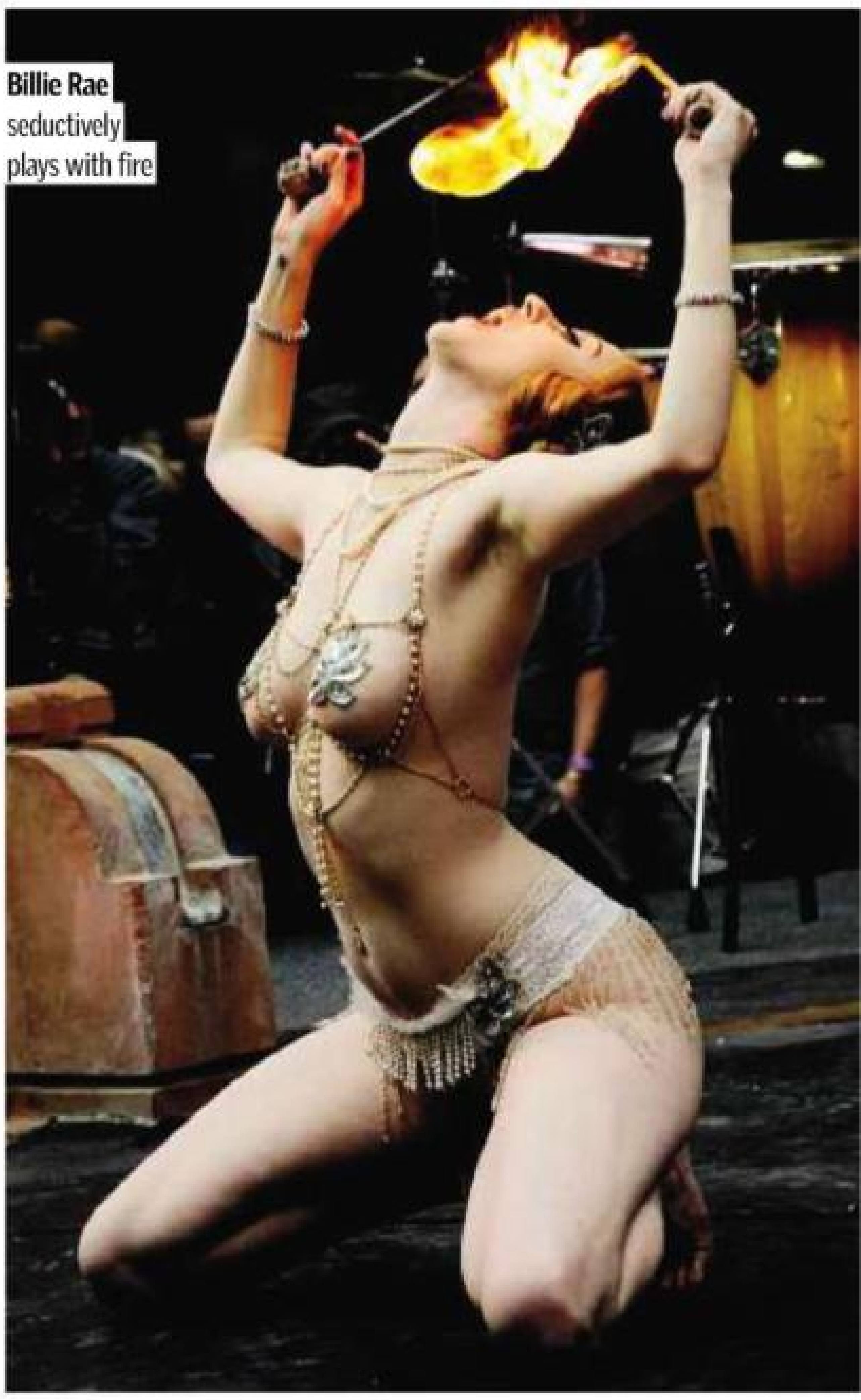


Mark Burridge "Audrey Hepburn wearing a ball gag? Why the hell not!"



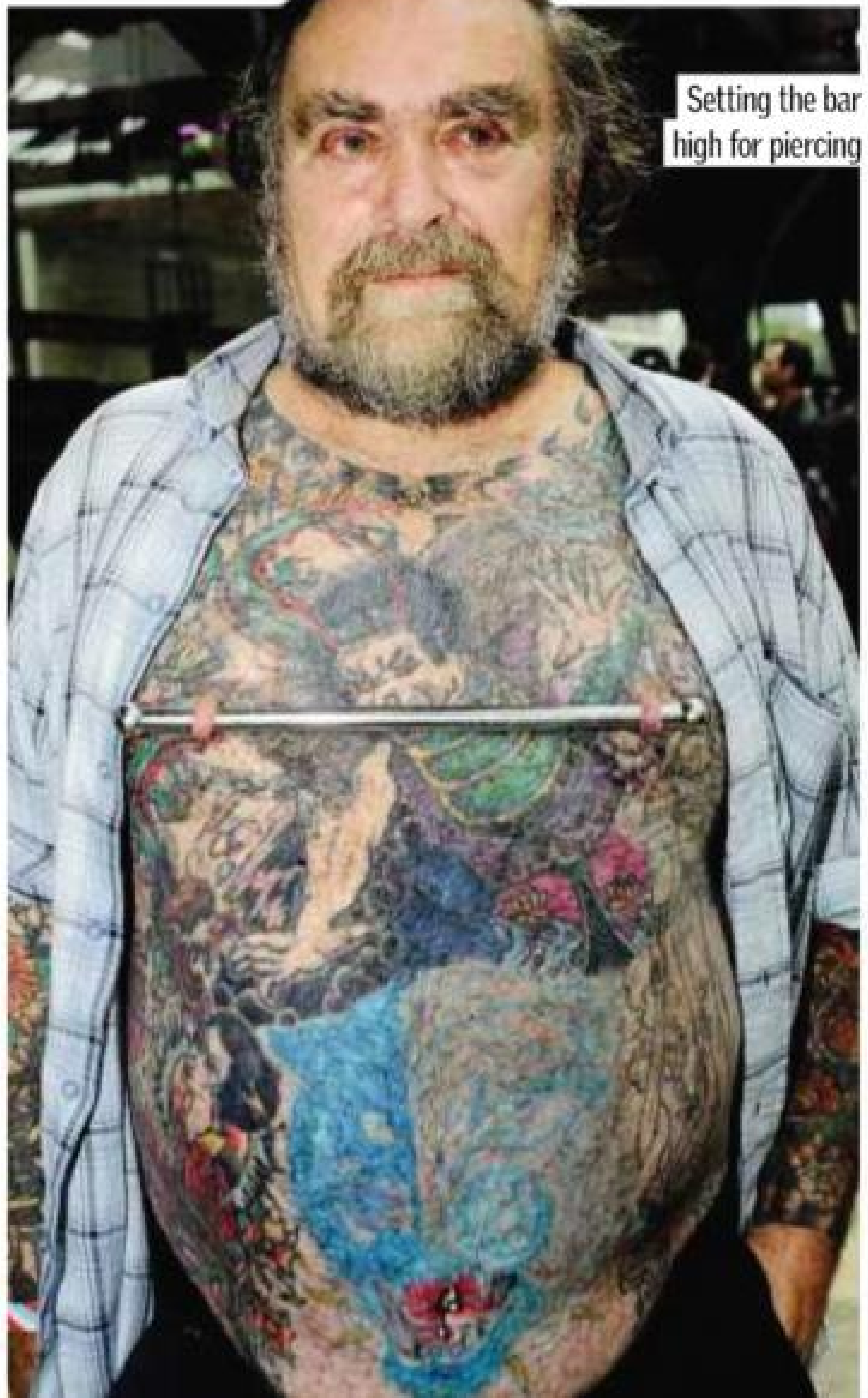
Bruno "When my mum saw my owl, she almost had a heart attack!"

A hand-tapped tattoo in action



Billie Rae seductively plays with fire

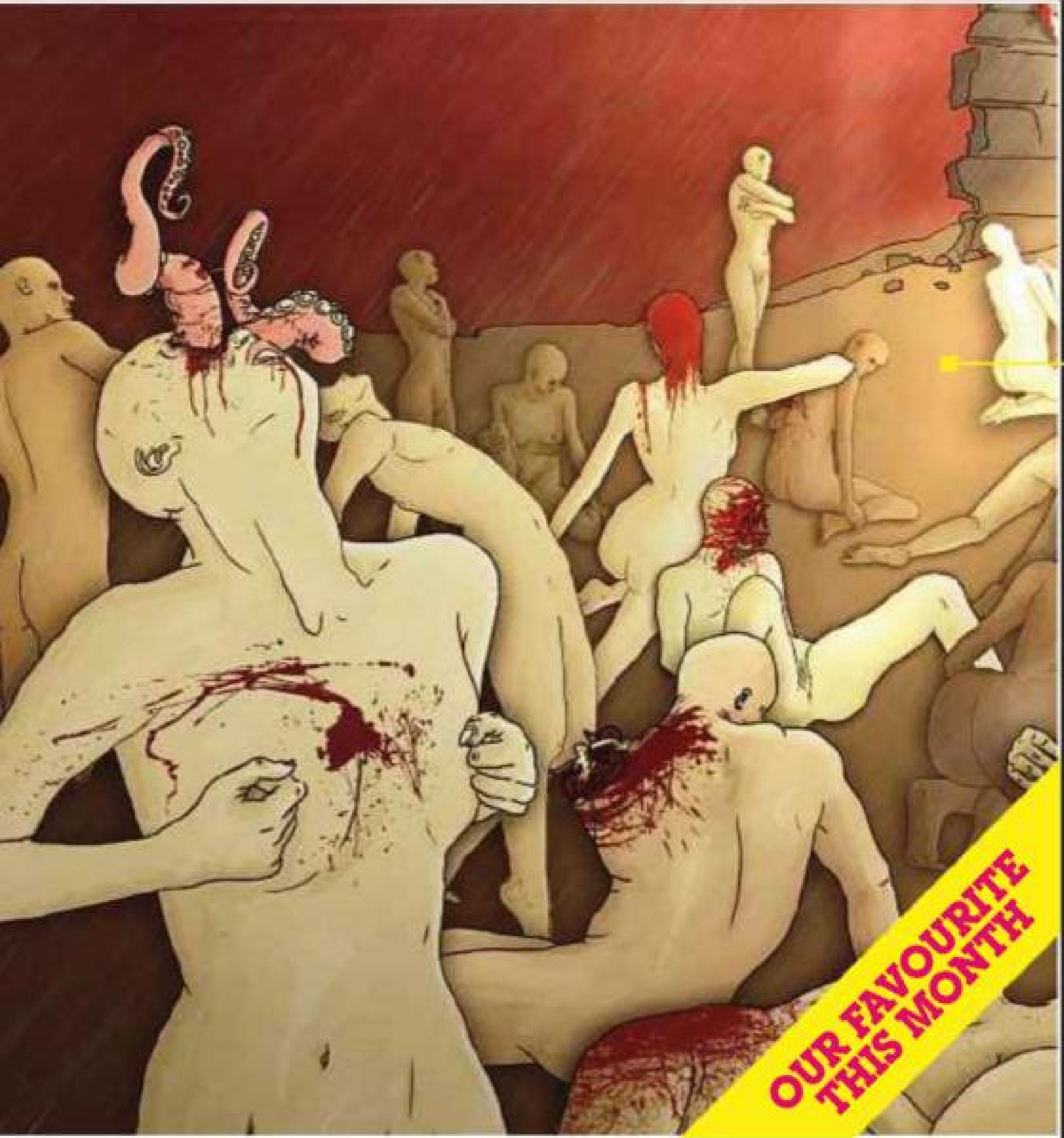
Mickey Hall "My throat shocks people; it's pretty in-your-face"



Setting the bar high for piercing

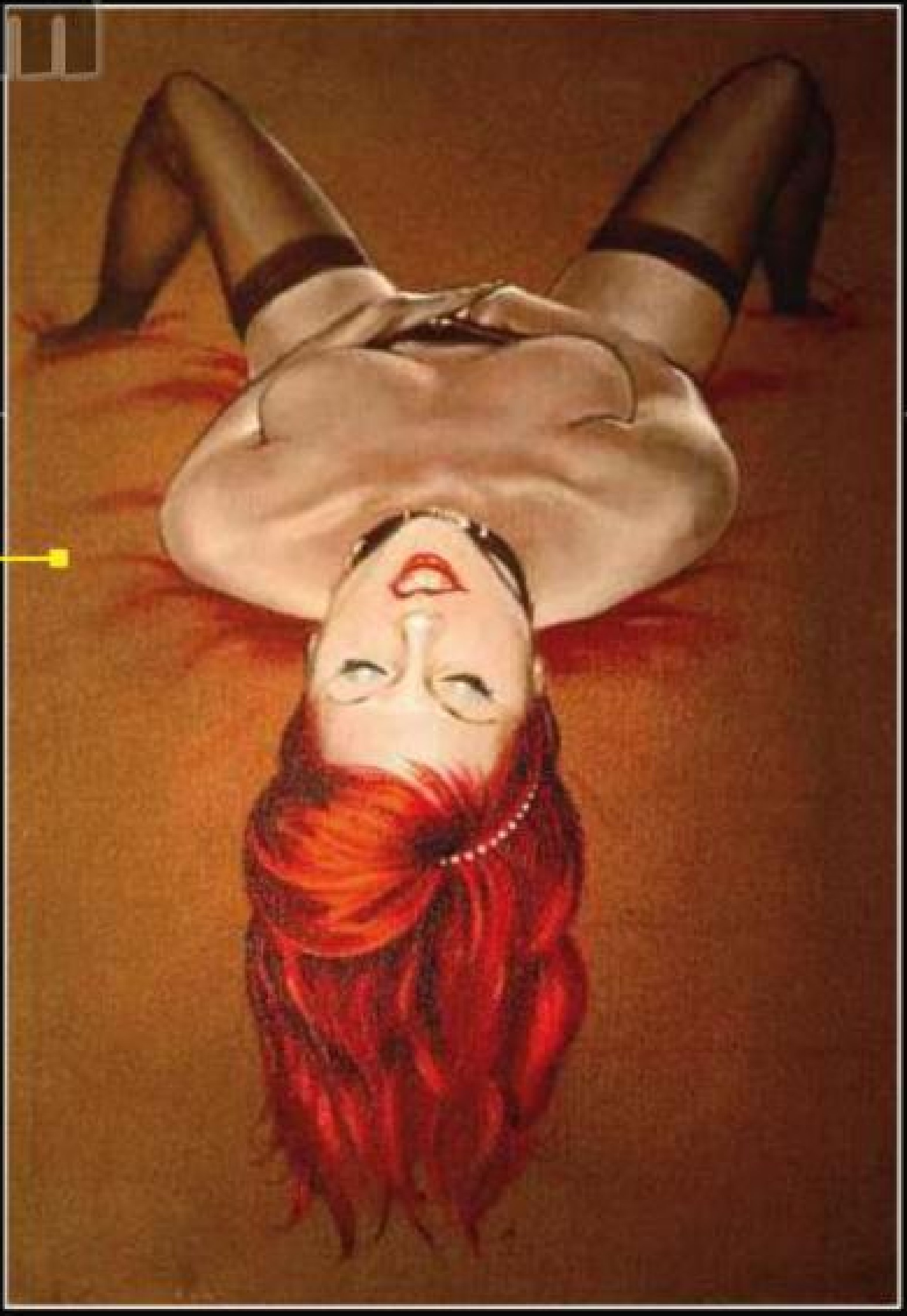
Readers' Art

YOUR DOODLES AND MASTERPIECES

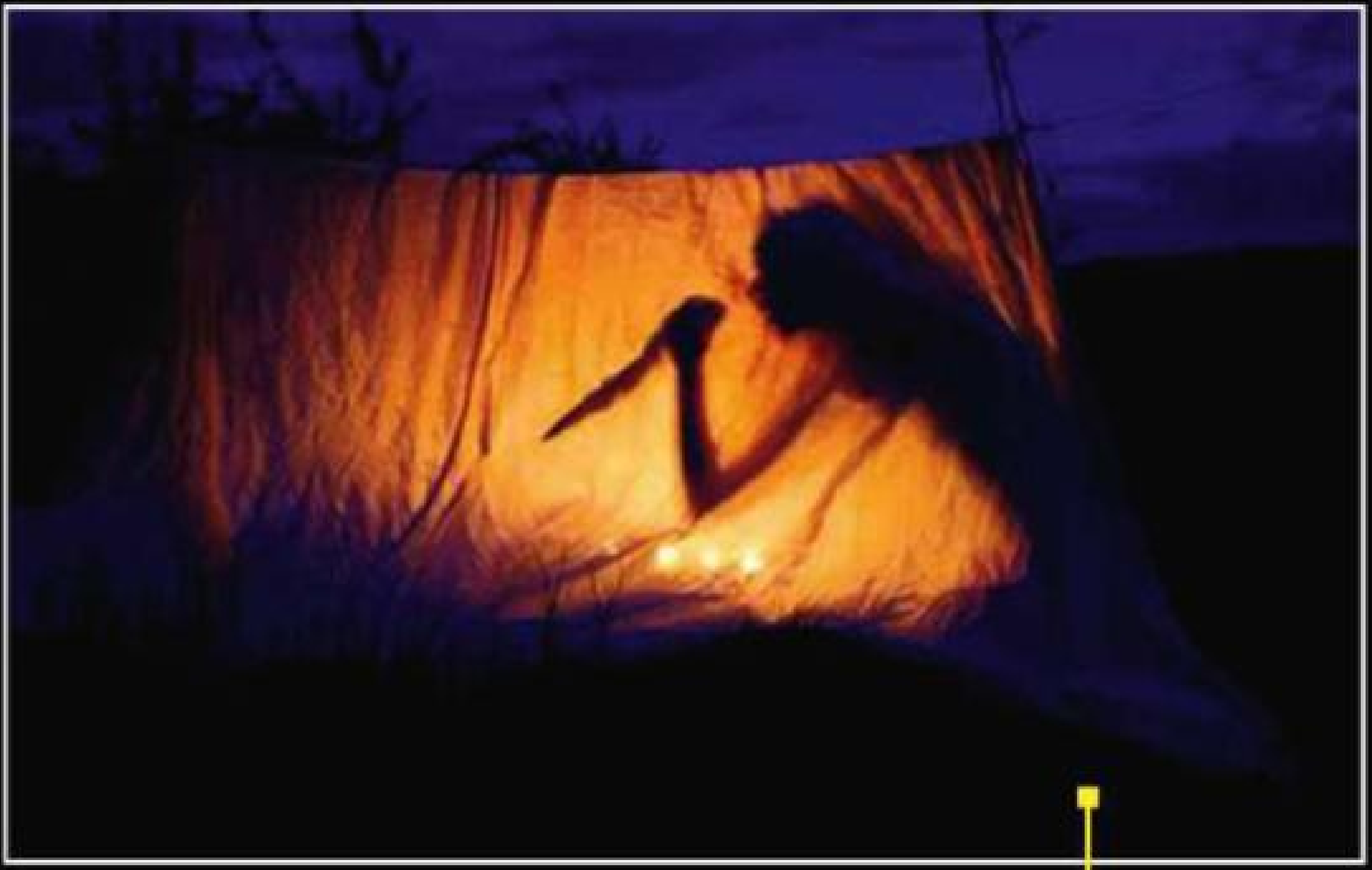


OUR FAVOURITE THIS MONTH

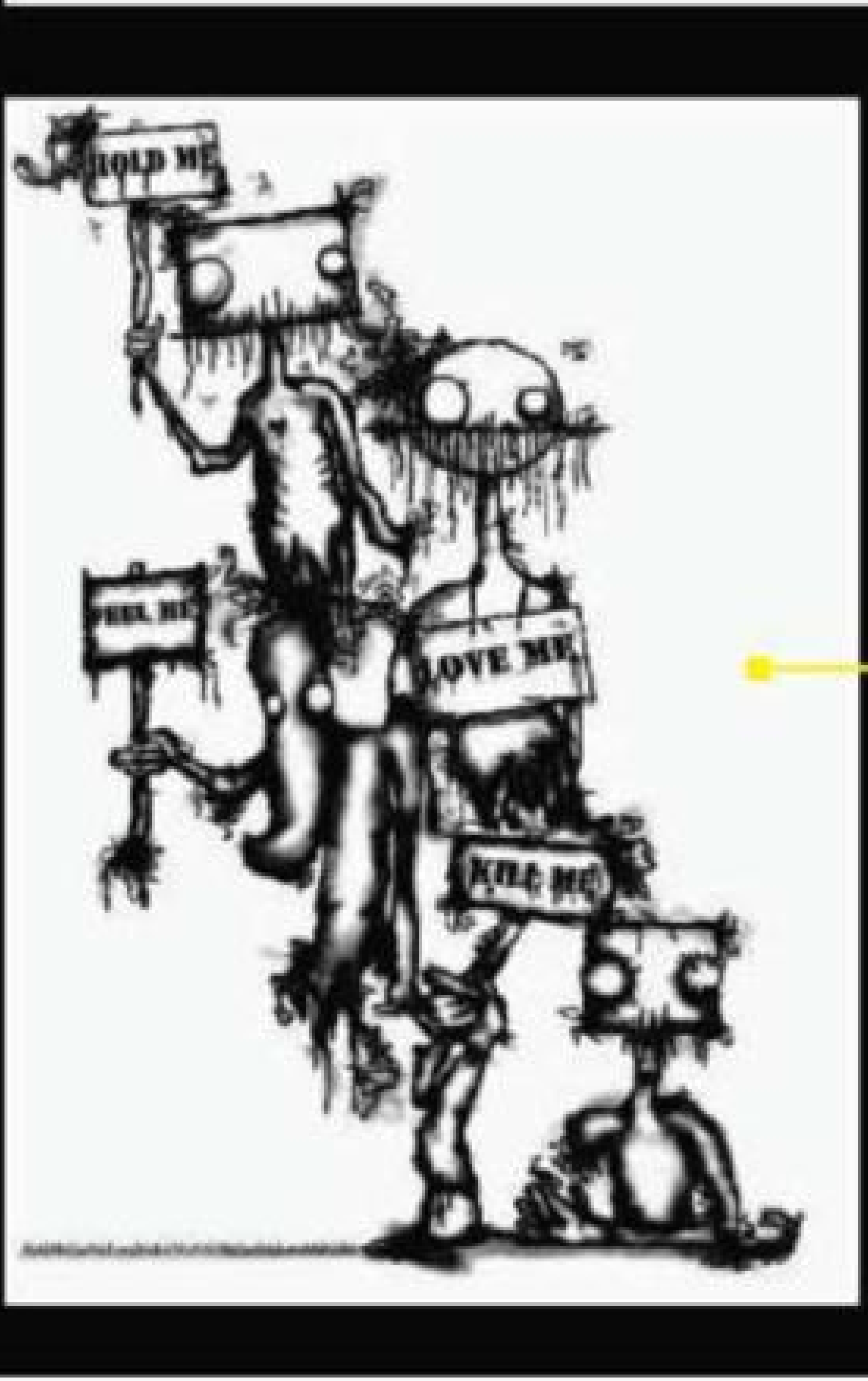
Colin Nicholls
Hereford
"This was submitted as the final piece of my illustration degree. It depicts hell, pain, and suffering, but in a beautiful way."
Tenclaw.co.uk



Mr Hues
Bournemouth
"My work is an expression of the women I've 'known'. They're filthy, dirty sex pictures."
Mrhues.com



Seanen Middleton
Kendal
"Reality bores me, so I like to create my own through photography. This piece is called 'Never Say No To Me.'"
Flickr.com/photos/seanenmiddleton



Aaron Hodkinson
Northwich
"The image was created using Photoshop and Illustrator and represents everyone who feels a bit different or like they don't fit in."
Aaron-hodkinson-illustration.blogspot.com

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TO ENTER

Email a photo or scan of your artwork to **Bizarre_Resistance@dennis.co.uk**. Please note that the maximum size for an attachment is 8MB. Please include your name, address and daytime telephone number in the main body of your email, and 30 words about your work and what inspires you. For full terms and conditions, see p7. Entrants must be 18 or over. No purchase necessary.

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BIZARRE'S Ultra Vixens

VixViper

29, Portsmouth

"I'm a hopeless romantic, and a sexual creature of the night who collects tattoos and reptiles. I love sleazy rock and the sound of Harley-Davidson engines – they get me going!"

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Vicious Val

28, Austria

"I'm sometimes hard to handle, but I make up for it by being cheerful, open-hearted and creative. The greatest sex is nothing without love, so my hottest fantasy is having sex with someone I adore."

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Miss Malice

20, Cornwall

"Modelling is my life and latex is my passion, so one day I hope to make my own outfits. I once did an outdoor photoshoot as a naughty nun, and shocked a couple of dog-walkers!"

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Evelien_Cascada

22, Earth

"If *Sons Of Anarchy* was real, my hottest fantasy would be getting swept off my feet by Jax Teller, having ravenous sex with him, then riding off on his bike into the sunset."

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PICTURE:ANDREW LOADER/GENICIMAGING.COM

Miel

24, Glasgow

"My kinkiest moment was being taken around Glasgow city centre on a Saturday afternoon on a lead. My proudest moment was completing my Virology degree. I'd like a soul mate who has a kind heart, a dark streak, and awesome hair."

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FoxyGoat

31, Chicago, USA

"I admire Larry Flynt, because he made vaginal history by bringing pornography to a hardcore level. He also took a bullet for our First Amendment Rights, and I appreciate that deep within my vaginal canal."

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Junko69

20, Essex

"By day, I'm a nerdy, virus-and-disease-loving scientist. By night, I'm a rubber-clad, fetishistic, deviant, cyber-perving, ninja-fiend with a penchant for cooking and latex."

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MissGorecki

22, Cornwall

"I'm creepily obsessed with zombies, guns, and killers, and once I saw a giant monkey in a hallucination. I'm proud that I've overcome negative thoughts about myself and started modelling."

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Don't be surprised if you see an Ultra Vixen you recognise in the magazine – we're not averse to featuring Vixens more than once if their pics are good enough. However, Vixens will only be able to enter the race for 2010's Ultimate Vixen once.

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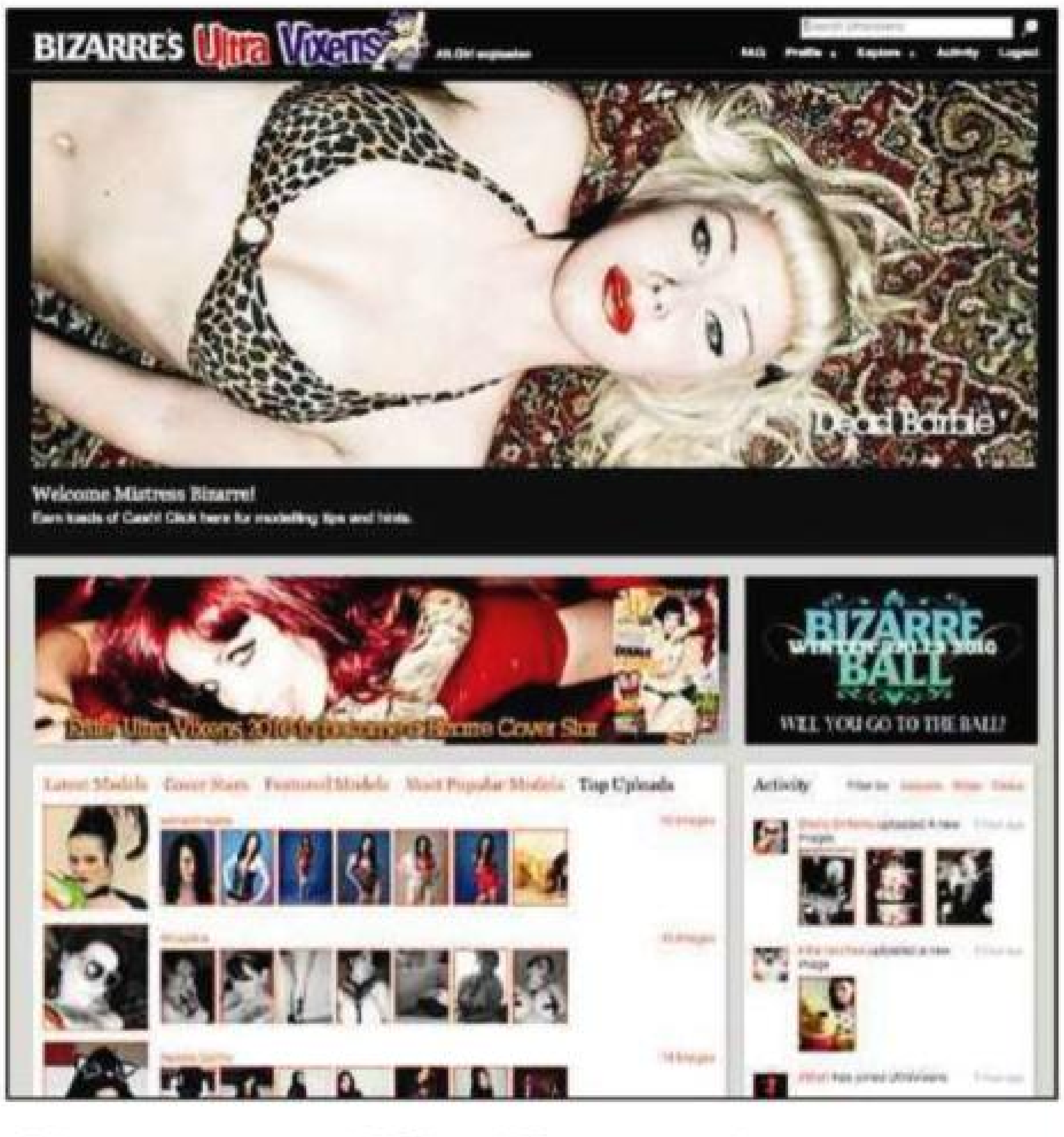
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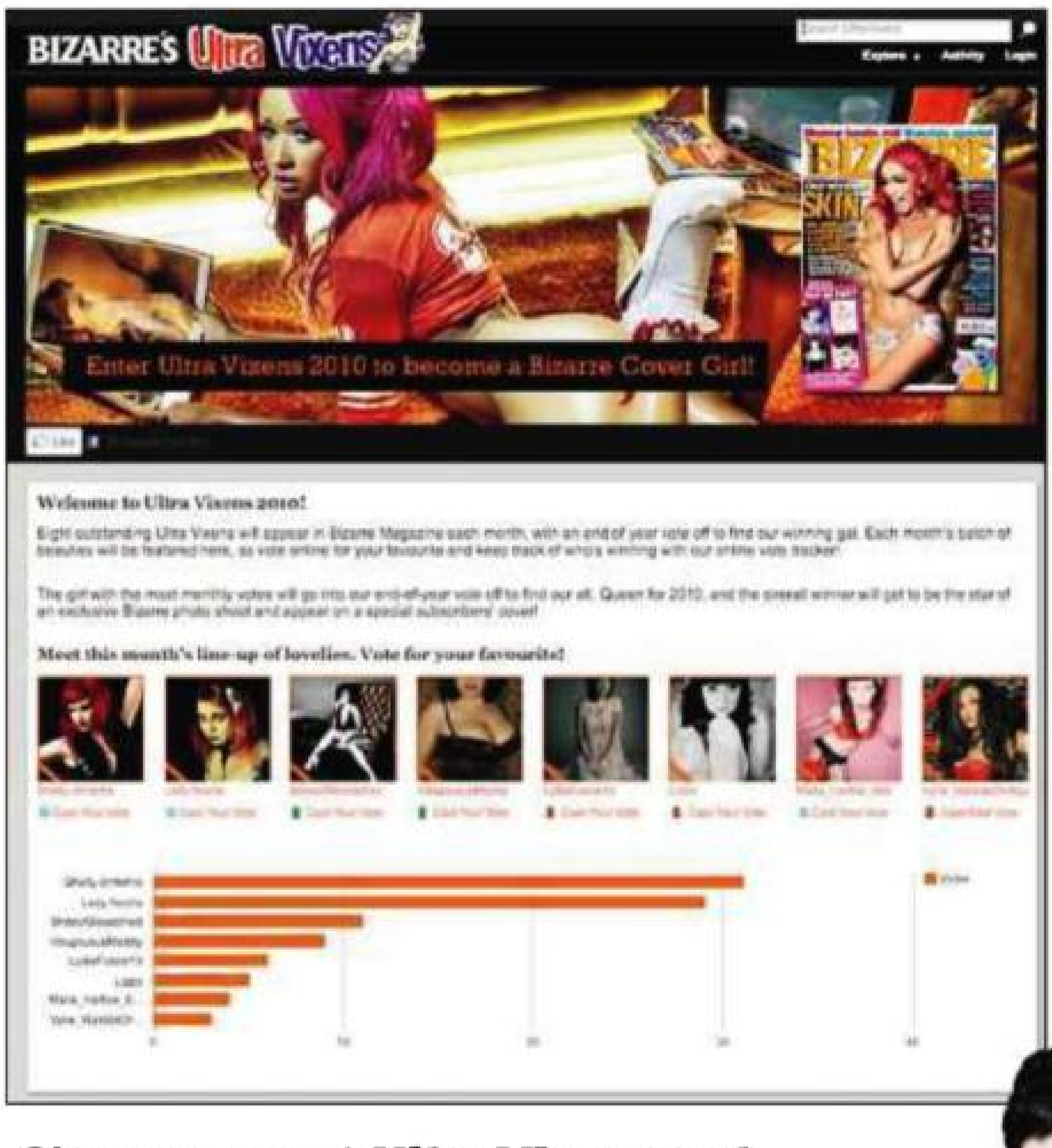
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WHAT YOU WIN

The winning girl from each issue wins a latex skull-and-crossbones eyepatch and nipple tassels, designed by *Bizarre* fave **Janedoelatex.com**

WANNA SEE WHICH GAL'S WINNING THE MOST VOTES? CHECK OUT OUR NEW ONLINE VOTE-TRACKER AT ULTRAVIXENS.NET/ COMPETITION

StaticMags

WORDS **KATE HODGES**
PHOTOS **JAMES DIMMOCK/
CORBIS OUTLINE**

Kat Von D

Our tattoo queen is laid bare through her ink, but remains a mystery inside...

What is it about Katherine Von Drachenberg that fascinates us? Maybe it's her devil-may-care attitude, made flesh by myriad tattoos that course up and down her body.

Perhaps it's her Hollywood glamour – she hangs out with a gang that includes *Jackass'* Bam Margera, the Eagles Of Death Metal and Jeffree Star, and has tattooed the likes of Lemmy, Kerry King of Slayer, Lady Gaga and HIM.

Or maybe it's because after two seasons as a featured artist on *Miami Ink* and four seasons as the shop-owning star of *LA Ink*, Kat's garnered enough screen time to make us feel that we know her, warts and all. However, we find out more about her on her TV show than we do through interviews. She's notoriously private, letting her tattoos do the talking rather than spilling her intimate secrets to the press.

What we *do* know about Kat's private life is communicated in the pop and glare of flashbulbs, as she walks red carpets with her latest rock'n'roll boyfriend. She's dated Roy Orbison's son Orbi and Mötley Crüe's Nikki Sixx, and she's now hooked up with Sandra Bullock's ex, Jesse James. Inevitably, there are already rumours that Kat is pregnant with his child.

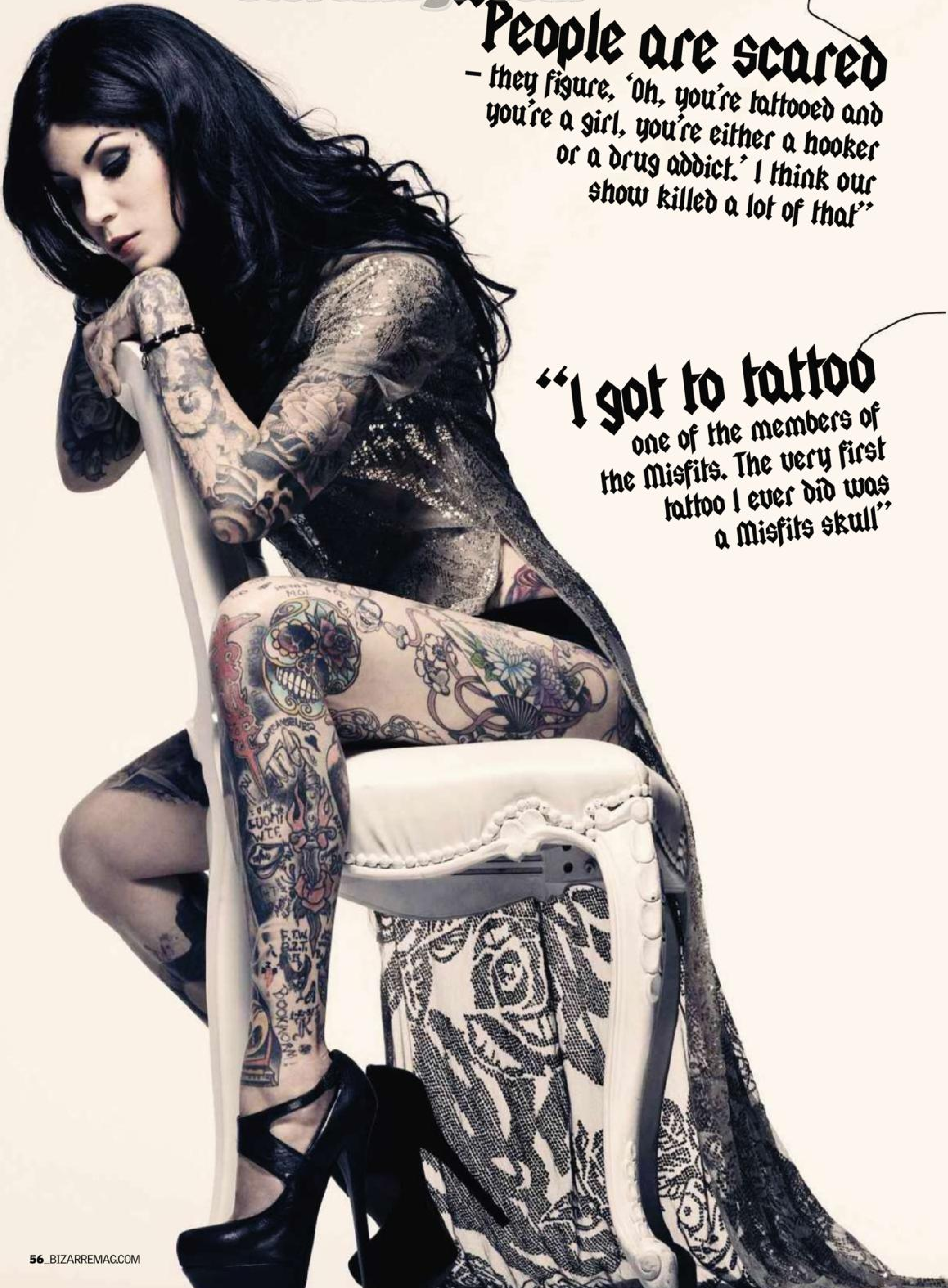
Kat's new book, *The Tattoo Chronicles*, covers a year in her life. She documents every tattoo she inks, with sketches, notes and thoughts on the significance of the design for both her client and herself. It's an insight into her thought processes and a rare glimpse into her personal feelings; her clients for the year include ex-boyfriend Nikki Sixx as well as Dave Navarro, Kirk Hammett, and customers brought to her through *LA Ink*.

A combination of the shrewd, the lewd and the tattooed, Kat Von D will continue to fascinate and intrigue us. In the meantime, while you're puzzling her out, cast your eyes over some of the most stunning pictures of Kat we've ever seen.

Kat is coming to the UK and doing an official signing. Meet her on Friday 26 November at Waterstones Piccadilly, 6pm

"People are scared – they figure, 'Oh, you're tattooed and you're a girl, you're either a hooker or a drug addict.' I think our show killed a lot of that"

"I got to tattoo one of the members of the Misfits. The very first tattoo I ever did was a Misfits skull"



"I remember this lady had got a portrait of her son who'd shot himself. When she was done she started crying and I held her. She came to me to help her heal. That's an honour"

"I'm a canvas of my experiences; my story is etched in lines and shading, and you can read it on my arms, my legs, my shoulders, and my stomach"

Los Angeles

"Music has always been about expressing yourself, and it's the same with tattoos. Tattoos influence music and music has always influenced tattoos"

"I did my first tattoo on myself when I was 14. It's a 'J' in old English lettering on my ankle that stood for 'James', my first love who I dated for three years. Now it just stands for 'Just kidding'"

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Kat Von D

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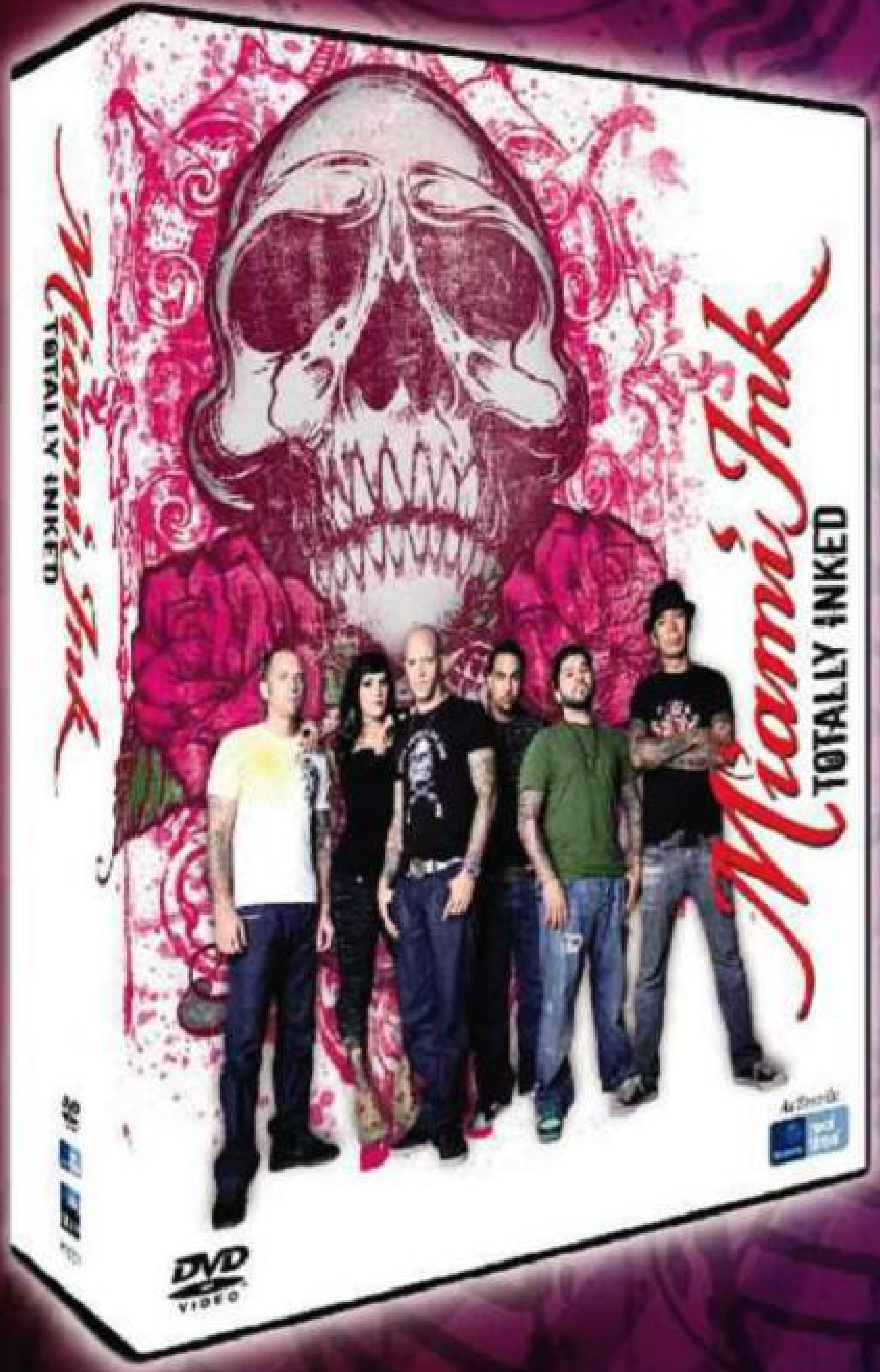
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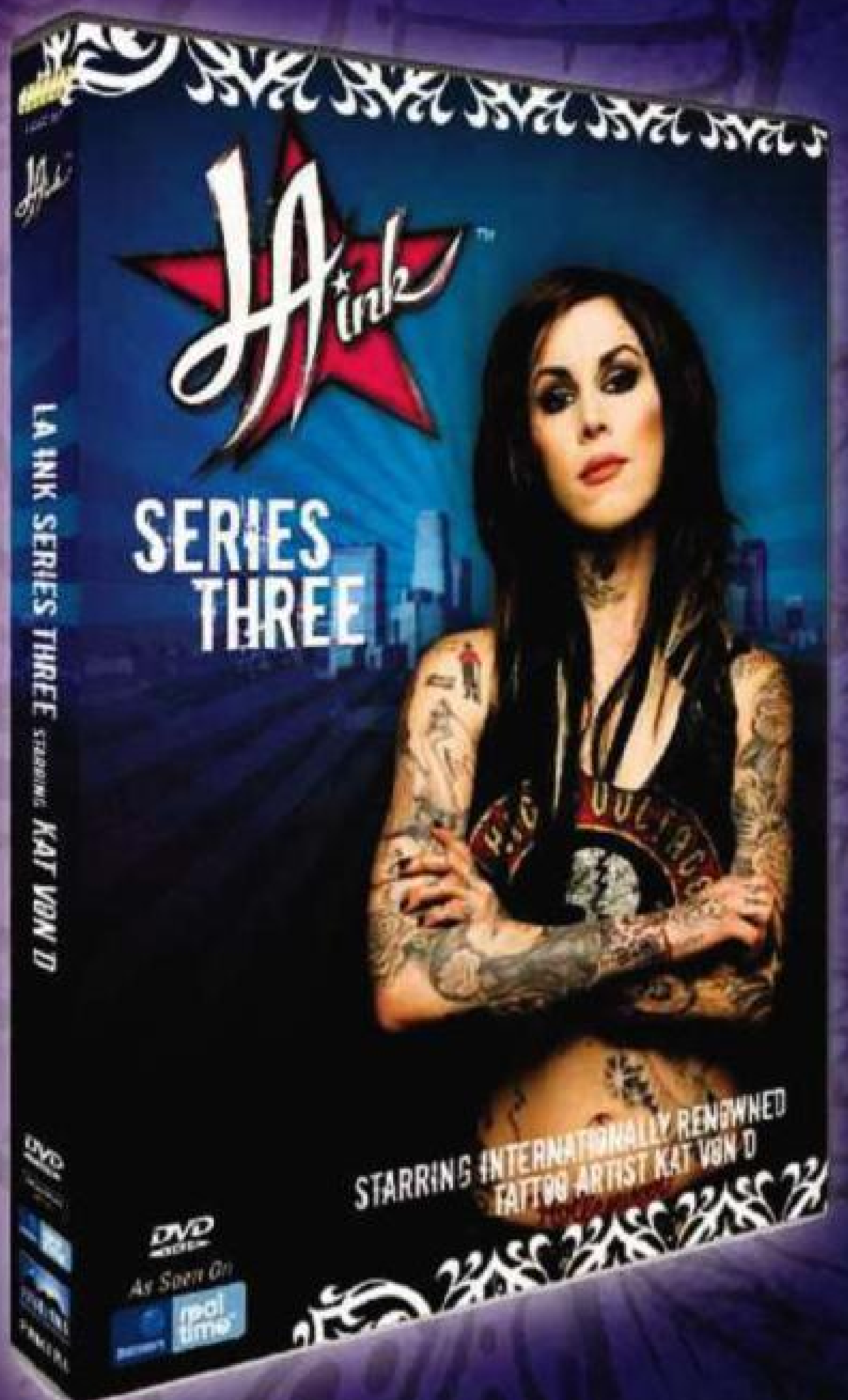
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Kat Von D is still doing big business at LA Ink, but with a long road of challenges ahead of her, will she manage to keep it all together?

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Tatt

Kat Von D's wicked new rivals on hit TV show *LA Ink*, Amy Nicoletto and Ruth Pineda, load their guns for a face-off

WORDS **CIARAN MCCAULEY**
PHOTOS **CHRISTIAN SAINT**

Fight

Kat Von D and the rest of the High Voltage team on hit reality TV show *LA Ink* are getting a run for their money courtesy of Amy Nicoletto and Ruth 'Ruthless' Pineda over at rival shop American Electric. The twin tattoo troublemakers, and their on-screen fireworks, have been a huge selling point of the programme's fifth season, and the animosity between the two of them, and Miss Von D, is getting Kattier by the minute.

Kat and 36-year-old New Jersey native, Amy, rubbed each other up the wrong way from the off, and Amy temporarily quit the show on her first day. "Kat was a complete bitch to me," reveals Amy. "She was ignorant. She got pissed off on-camera because I said I do portraits, and that's her thing. But she hadn't even said 'Hello', or 'Welcome to my shop'. I couldn't believe she was that much of a shitball, so I quit."

Amy's feisty reaction endeared her to fans and she was called back to *LA Ink*. But her attitude to the program's star attraction remains unchanged. "I have no harsh feelings towards her, but I think fame might've messed her up in the head a little," says Amy. "I can see how it could happen, but she doesn't hide from the spotlight at all."

Her 25-year-old Californian co-star, Ruthless, feels the same. "I've met Kat Von D many times – even before I was on the show – but she never remembers who I am, and it's insulting," she says. "Many people who come into American Electric find her to be rude and mean. It sucks. She's forgotten where she came from." →

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Ruthless and Amy have also been at each other's throats since the former touched down at American Electric and stole Amy's work station. Since then, the tension between them has escalated to full-on aggression, culminating in Ruthless threatening to knock Amy's teeth out. Ouch. Are they really this cold to each other in real-life? Ruthless sidesteps the issue, saying, "There's more to it that what people see on TV. If people give me a chance beyond what they see on telly, they'll realise I'm a cool chick and know me for who I am." Amy, however, is more pointed. "It's not that spicy in real life," she says. "Shit happens once in a while, but not that many times in every episode. But a lot of it *is* real."

Tattooing bell-ends

Despite their animosity towards each other, the ink duo have plenty in common, especially odd tattoo requests. Amy's weirdest was, "a really big black girl who asked me to tattoo her butt cheek with a monkey being hit on the head by a coconut, with 'Tyrone' written underneath. It kills me that I didn't ask what the story was. Another guy wanted Bruce Wills on his leg with 'Yippeekayay!' But he wouldn't get 'motherfucker' as well – and that's the whole point of the quote!"

> "I couldn't believe Von D was so much of a shitball"

But errant *Die Hard* references and bizarre monkeys are nothing on Ruthless' encounter with a sketchy character who asked for a cock tatt. "He wanted a squid on his penis but he had a hole in his wanger – aside from the one that should be there – and wanted me to look and make sure it would be OK to tattoo him. He got it out and then said, 'Oh, don't worry, you'll have more canvas than this…' and started jerking off right in front of me. I was so pissed off! I cussed him out of the shop."

Neither Amy nor Ruthless imagined they'd be on TV, and they've both only been tattooing since 2004. Despite a long-standing interest in ink, Amy dabbled with other career paths, such as art and medicine. "I was going to go for nursing, but I realised I couldn't stomach wiping old people's asses," she laughs. But the death of Amy's friend finally compelled her to go into ink. "Rob was about to open a tattoo shop when he hanged himself," she explains. "We'd lost touch, but everyone at the funeral was talking about how it was his dream to open a shop. I know it sounds cheesy, but his death made me think that I had to get into tattooing. It was a wake-up call."

Amy secured an apprenticeship at a shop in South Jersey where she was kept at the bottom of the ladder. But working non-stop on there gave Amy the start she needed and the budding artist soon picked up tattooing and moved to Atlantic City in search of a new challenge. "I ended up in a shop called Hot Rod, where I learned all kinds of lettering," she says "Some artists are great at portraits, but when you notice their lettering it's like, 'Ew, yikes!'," she grimaces. "But I learned a bit of everything and was taught not to specialise."

It's a philosophy she shares with Ruthless, who's also fiercely against pigeonholing herself. As a kid, she wanted to be in the superhero business. "I didn't know what I wanted to do for a living, but I wanted to do everything," Ruthless says. "If people needed something done, I wanted to be the saviour, the hero."

So, during her childhood, Ruthless took up every extra-curricular activity, class, and sport on offer, and excelled at basketball and cross country running. She even enrolled in police training, coming top of her class. Ruthless spent weekends exercising and eating healthily – not touching junk food until she cracked open her first packet of crisps six weeks ago. So how did this driven, ambitious child get turned on to tattooing?

"The first time I saw tattoos I thought, 'No way! You can put art on your body permanently?'" she exclaims. "I was always into art, and tattoos seemed so awesome." Six years ago she gained an apprenticeship under the tutelage of Tattoo Joe, an artist based in Bridgeport, Connecticut. Swapping coasts was a life-changing decision and a culture shock →

AMY NICOLETTO

Nerve-racking ink and her meaningful favourites

BLACK HEART

“This tattoo on my arm was coloured in by my boyfriend. He was nervous about doing it because he'd only ever done one bit of ink before. And, no, I didn't get it because I'm black-hearted – I have a heart of gold, which gets me into trouble!”

OWL

“Corey Miller, one of my co-stars on *LA Ink*, did this and it's amazing. I've always loved owls; they remind me of my aunt who passed away – she loved them too. And when I was a kid, an owl lived outside my bedroom.”

ROBOT

“It's a traditional, old school, 1950's-style robot on my arm. I love sci-fi movies and toys from that era, and I want to get more tattoos inspired by them.”

GYPSY

“This is also on my arm. It's not my favourite tattoo, but my mum always called me 'Gypsy' or 'Gyps', so it's for her. I don't mind the nickname, I'm used to it, especially since my friends call me that.”

to the Los Angelina. “Tattoo Joe's training was like a boot camp – I had to do push-ups, sit-ups and tidy the apartment,” she says. “But it made sense. That's how you find out you're really committed.”

Ruthless' tattoo fascination, however, clashed with her sheltered upbringing. During her apprenticeship, Ruthless got her first tatt – a skull and flowers surrounded by water, wrapping around her upper arm – and it brought her mother to tears. “My parents come from the Philippines where pretty much the only people with tattoos are murderers, gangsters or criminals,” she explains. “So when my mom heard about my tattoo she bawled her eyes out and told me I'd ruined my life. It's taken my parents a couple of years to come around. But both of them have become really supportive.”

Picky skin-prickers

Weirdly, both girls describe themselves as under-inked for tattoo artists, and they're choosy with designs. Ruthless takes the meaning in tattoos seriously – a trait Amy shares after a “horrible” experience getting her first tatt aged 18, an anime Devil-man. It didn't heal properly and she doesn't like the design. “I don't hate any of my tattoos, because they represent a memory,” Amy says. “But I didn't get the itch to keep going with it. But when I started tattooing, colleagues would say, ‘if you're going to be tattooing people, then you need to have more visible ink on you.’” So Amy subsequently covered her arms and shoulders with tattoos, but she's still picky. “I like to think it through as much as possible as I haven't always in the past,” she explains.

After years of jobbing around various tattoo shops and freelancing, the pair got their big break on *LA Ink*. Amy joined the cast in its third season after responding to a production e-mail seeking new artists. It was perfect timing. Having realised a life-long ambition by moving to LA in 2008, found that the dream was turning into a nightmare. “I got to LA and started choking financially because I couldn't get enough work,” Amy says. “I was on the verge of finding another job to supplement my income and ended up on the show. *LA Ink* was a scary idea, but when I'm afraid of something I try to conquer it.”

Ruthless was the next to sign up – for the fourth season. She was interviewed for the role last year, after she'd moved back to LA, and started filming just six months later.

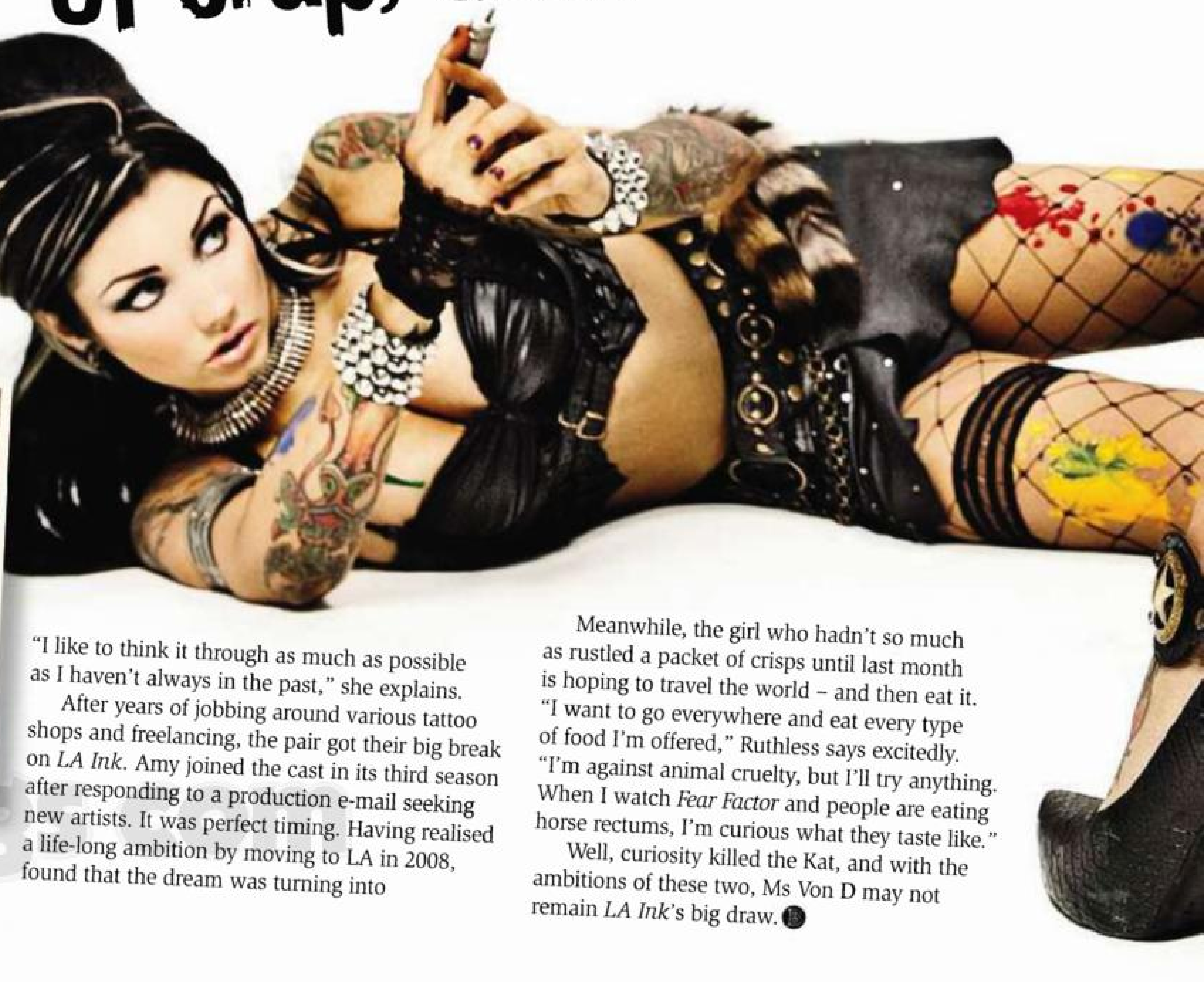
But, despite the long hours and having to deal with Kat Von D, neither have any regrets about participating in a show that's propelled their careers into the stratosphere. While Ruthless was initially ‘”overwhelmed” by the workload for *LA Ink*, she enjoys the camaraderie between cast and crew, and Amy's just happy to have got her name out there. “While there are parts of the show I despise – like all the drama – I just want people to see my artwork,” Amy reveals. “If I have to take a bunch a crap or make an ass of myself, then so be it. A lot of tattoo artists frown on the show but I guarantee you, if *they* were offered the chance, 98 per cent would do it.”

Now both girls are looking to the future. For Amy, that means spending time with her partner Michael, who lives in Glasgow, and her 16-year-old son Cameron, who lives in New Jersey with his grandmother. “He's 6ft4in and a pain in the ass,” Amy chuckles. “No, I'm kidding, he's a good kid. Although he keeps bugging me for a tattoo, and I won't let him get one until he's 18.”

Meanwhile, the girl who hadn't so much as rustled a packet of crisps until last month is hoping to travel the world – and then eat it. “I want to go everywhere and eat every type of food I'm offered,” Ruthless says excitedly. “I'm against animal cruelty, but I'll try anything. When I watch *Fear Factor* and people are eating horse rectums, I'm curious what they taste like.”

Well, curiosity killed the Kat, and with the ambitions of these two, Ms Von D may not remain *LA Ink*'s big draw.

“If I have to take a bunch of crap, then so be it”



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RUTHLESS

Top animal tattoos and dedications to her family

MAKE-UP: CHRISTINA SCHOCK; HAIR: ANTHONY MICHAEL CRESS; STYLING/CUSTOM MADE OUTFITS: ROXY CONTIN (ROXYCONTIN.COM); THANKS TO MIAUHAUS STUDIOS

TIGER

“I have a tiger on my right arm because the animal symbolises strength, and I'm right-handed. I know it sounds cheesy, but when I'm feeling weak, I look at it and remember that I have the strength to do anything.”

BIRDS

“The tattoos on my left arm are about spirituality – life, death and fate. Birds symbolise free-spiritedness, so they remind me to stay free and make the best of the time I have.”

ROSES

“I have roses in different styles on both of my feet. On my left foot they're paired with my parents' names, and on my right, my sisters' names. My family are my foundation.”

LADYBUG

“This one on my ankle's less serious. I got it because my house was surrounded by ladybugs in summer when I was young, and my sisters and I kept them in jars.”

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LOWE BLOW

WORDS **CIARAN MCCAULEY**
PHOTOS **ESTER SEGARRA**

London Ink's **Nikole Lowe** talks crap body art, acting the cunt and her fighting injuries

For someone who never wanted to be a tattooist, Nikole Lowe has stormed the ink world. Halfway through our interview she describes her whole career as "something that just kind of happened by accident". She has a point. From the rural backwaters of New Zealand to her new tattoo shop in hipster Shoreditch, via the nation's TV screens as the fierce heart of hit reality show *London Ink*, the tattoo trailblazer's career has been littered with decisions she never envisioned making. Nikole never aspired to be on TV. Or own her own shop, which she only opened because her hairdresser said she should.

"I always told myself a shop would be too much hassle," she recalls. "But my hairdresser told me I had to get one. And afterwards I was riding my pushbike over Waterloo Bridge saying to myself: 'I'm going to do it! I'm going to get a shop, and it'll be in a house with a garden and a fireplace and… wheeee!'"

So thanks to Nikole's property-speculating hairdresser, here we are in Good Times Tattoo, the shop she never wanted but absolutely adores. Museum-style display cases filled with butterflies dot the walls, and there's a startling collection of religious images in the corner – a floor-to-ceiling shrine of statues and pictures featuring Jesus, Buddha and Ganesha. "I'm not religious, I just like looking at the pictures," the 37-year-old explains. Later on she'll show me her 'cock' collection of dildos and genital sculptures (as well as a glass cockerel) and tell me her bathroom is covered in porn. "It's a nice place to keep it," she reckons.

Tonight's original plan was to retreat to the nearest pub for pints, but Nikole is off the booze for a detox week. It's surprising, given her reputation as a tattooist is only matched by her reputation for drinking and she has an anti-straight edge tattoo on the inside of her right wrist; three ticks representing 'yes' to sex, drink and drugs. Is the 'rock'n'roll wild child', as the Discovery Channel called her, slowing down?

Nikole's upstanding cock collection

Nikole lets out a huge, echoing cackle. "They only called me that because I made them get me a martini at six o'clock in the morning! No, I've calmed down a lot since getting the business and a partner this year. I used to go out with my mates and get drunk five nights a week, but with all the work I've got on I can't do that. I think I was only out three times last week…"

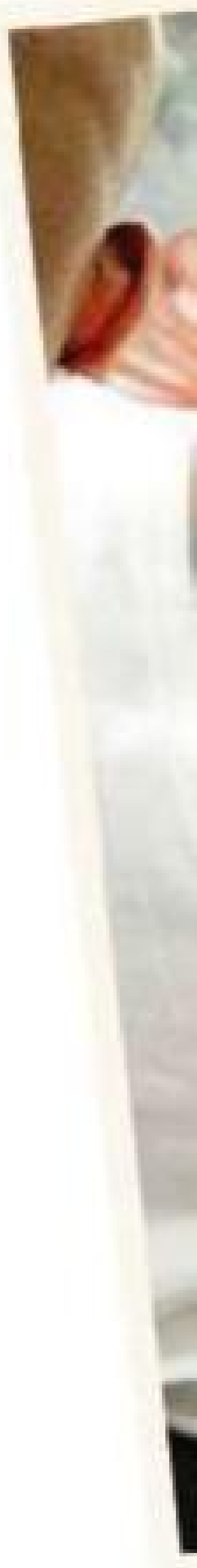
Was that all? "I know," she smiles. "That's not very rock'n'roll, is it?"

Wild at heart

Brought up on a farm north of Auckland, Nikole is a self-styled country girl who thought she'd be a singer or a musician when she grew up. But when she started trying to sell her designs to tattoo shops aged 18, she ended up with a job. "Tattooing drew me in straight away, like a drug," she explains. "I felt comfortable even though I'd never thought of doing it because my parents were against it. They didn't take it too well – although that might have had something to do with the fact that I started dating the guy who hired me, and he was 16 years older than me," she grins. Luckily her folks are now at ease with Nikole's passion. "They're really proud of me now. When I go home they show me off."

After years of plying her trade in and around Auckland, and propelled by fears of stagnation, →

Storemags



Dr-ink

Stumble over Nikole's random tatts

CUNTFACE AND DICKHEAD

“ It's based on erotic Japanese art, called *shunga*. I wanted them under my armpits because it's traditional to hang prints like that where people can't see them. They were both done by Wido de Marval in Switzerland. Dickhead is based on a Japanese print from the 1800s and Wido inked a vagina on a geisha's head for Cuntface. I'm a pervert and I love it. ”

VODKA

“ Well, I like vodka. And when I got this tatt, I was drinking a lot of it in Oakland, California. I was staying with a guy called Freddy Corbin who does amazing texts, and while we were drunk I decided I wanted something by him and went with 'vodka! ”

DON'T CARE

“ When I was at a tattoo convention in Milan with my best mate Michaela, we decided to get our hands done. We spent the whole day thinking about what we were going to get and realised that we didn't care – so that's what we got. We were really drunk at a party and Chad Koeplinger did them in our room. So that's two drunk tattoos out of three. ”

HOT DOG, PAPER PLANE AND BOXING DUDE

“ I got the hot dog because I love sausages – I really fucking love them. I'm so addicted I have to limit my sausage intake. I got the boxing dude for my partner Darren. And I got the paper plane because it fitted in the space. Duncan X at Into You did all three. ”

Nikole upped sticks to London. She feels she owes the city a lot – in awe of the tattoo quality in the capital, she resolved to forget what she knew about tattooing and start from scratch. "I had some really bad habits," she explains. "Moving over was a real eye-opener and I forced myself to stop partying every night and put my head down and study. I also decided I was going to become the best tattoo artist in the country. And the world."

Part of that resolve led to an evolution in Nikole's style, from realism to the intricate Japanese work for which she's renowned. "I like the boldness of Japanese work," she says. "The style works well on the body. I wasn't all that clued-up on it when I first came to the UK, but the way it looks got to me."

However, not all of the requests she receives are artistically rewarding or straightforward. "Once, I tattooed a cartoon duck on a dwarf's dick," Nikole says. "I had to help him up on the bed – it was surreal – and later he came back for cartoon eyes on his bum."

And when Nikole started practicing she tattooed animals at a vet's surgery. "I inked a St Bernard's third eyelid black," she confesses. "I didn't want to do it. It was a nasty, awful thing to do. Sorry dog."

"When I tattooed a cartoon duck on a dwarf's dick I had to help him on to the bed. It was surreal"

Talent on TV

Nikole's arrival on reality TV in 2007 helped cement her position as one of London's most sought-after tattoo artists. When Louis Molloy called Nikole to gauge her interest in a new show called *London Ink*, he also called her friend Phil Kyle. "We told one another 'I'll do, it if you do it.' So we pushed each other into it," she says.

But adjusting to the demands of TV producers was difficult for the free-spirited Antipodean, and she's admitted to being "a real cunt" when the show first started. "I'd worked hard to get where I was and I really wanted to make a good impression, but I wasn't given the chance," she says. "They wanted me to do stupid tattoos that had no artistic merit. The problem was, if I did one fairy on TV I'd be fucked because everyone would start asking me for fairies."

The producers of *London Ink* were interested in the story behind the tatts – the journey of the person being inked – but Nikole was only interested in art. "I don't care what tattoos mean. I'm not a psychiatrist," she says. "It's probably important to the individual getting it but I can't take on everyone's problems. I struggled with that and came across as a cunt because I kept saying 'no' to the designs they wanted me to ink, but eventually it got easier and I got to do more of my own stuff. I'm easy to read though – if I'm in a bad mood, you know about it," she laughs. "But I'm generally not in a bad mood – I'm actually quite a happy person."

Despite Nikole's teething problems, she doesn't regret doing the show and enjoys good relationships with her co-stars. "We're all good mates, although Louis and Dan Gold hate each other", she says. "That's real. But then, no-one likes everybody."

And how does Nikole feel about *LA Ink* or *Miami Ink*, the American shows that spawned the London programme? "Um, actually I've never seen them," she admits, gleefully. "I saw Sky for the first time ever six weeks ago and it's amazing! I'm too busy watching *America's Next Top Model* to tune into those shows."

Knock 'em out

When Nikole isn't inking or drinking, she's happiest throwing rights and lefts at her local boxing gym. Although she's been unable to do much punching recently after she dislocated her shoulder during her only proper fight. "I threw a bad punch and my opponent punched me in the shoulder at that moment. *He* told me to throw it," Nikole says, accusingly pointing at her long-term boyfriend, and boxing trainer, Darren. "It's a shame because I was good. I would've flattened that girl. She was fucking lucky."

Is Nikole lucky? Will accidents keep propelling her upwards? The New Zealander's future plans are modest: within three years she wants a hot tub and decking on her patio – "we've all got to have goals!". Her 10-15 year plan is to help her parents retire by giving them some money. And she'd love to retire and buy her own island. But until then, being happy and getting better at her art will suffice. "I just want to do good tattoos," she grins. "I'm hard on myself and I'm constantly pushing myself. But I want to be able to tattoo with my eyes closed – like Jedi tattooing. And make sure my family is OK. And sit in my hot tub. And be happy."

Nikole's iconotastic home

Nikole inks a sleeve at Good Times Tattoo

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Back to BASICS

Meet the spiritual inkers on a mission to bring tattooing back to its origins

WORDS **DENISE STANBOROUGH**
PHOTOS **JOE PLIMMER**

Tattoos have never been as hot as they are now. Sure, they've always been popular among certain fractions of society, but you'd be hard pushed to find a time that rivals today's widespread and increasingly mainstream consumption of tattoo TV shows, dedicated books and magazines, merchandise emblazoned with sacred hearts, international conventions, and inked-up celebs and their identically inked-up fans. Tattooing. Has. Exploded.

But in the midst of the hype, is proper consideration being given to the origins of ink? Does the 17-year-old girl, who has the same hand tattoo as Cheryl Cole, think about how this long-standing tradition has evolved? Possibly not, but there are some traditional tattoo 'purists' who are shaking off the glamourous trimmings and fakery, and taking inking back to its roots...

Sacred art

Ferank Manseed, a British-born hand tattooist of seven years, is on a mission to educate people about the spiritual side of tattooing, in the hope of keeping old techniques and symbolism alive.

"The Egyptians, Celts, Picts, ancient Greeks – just about every culture – pushed ink into the skin, using sharks' teeth, rose thorns and pelican bones, along with pigments such as soot or red ochre," he says. "And as soon as needles came along in the Iron Age, people used them to mark their skin. Tattooing didn't start with Kat Von D, this tradition has been around for centuries." →

Durga performs a hand-tapped tattoo on his customer's back

"At the age of 18, you're desperate to prove yourself to your peers. But tattooing isn't a contest"

Today's popular view, that tattooing is an expression of youth rebellion, is a far cry from the reasons why ancient communities wore tattoos. They indicated tribal status, healing, protection, a rite of passage, acts of love, or the mark of evil, slavery or criminality. Each culture attaches different meanings to tattoos, but Ferank feels that any meaningful symbolism has been buried under shallow tattoo trends. "For an 18-year-old girl with a Bettie Page fringe, it might be cool to have your chest and neck inked with Sailor Jerry designs. At that age you're desperate to prove yourself to your peers, but it's not a contest, it's your body," he says.

Ancient crafts

Ferank's traditional method of tattooing is called hand-poking. "The tool I use involves attaching a needle to something that you hold like a chopstick, dipping the needle into ink, then pushing the needle into the skin. Some hand-tattooists do a 'pricking out' technique, where they put the needle in, and flick it out. That way of tattooing is much quicker, but it's more aggressive and I don't like to work that way. I'm a real gentleman."

Colin Dale, who was born in Canada, but now works as a tattooist in Denmark, has resurrected an ancient Inuit hand-sewing technique that hasn't been used for over 80 years. Thread is dipped in ink, then sewed through the skin, leaving a residue of pigment at the needle's entry and exit points. "I became interested in it after studying Inuit crafts at art school. Inuit women used to sew and embroider cloth to make clothes while the men were off hunting and fishing, and that skill, which their art sprang from, was adapted for tattoos."

Hand-poke tattooing a knee

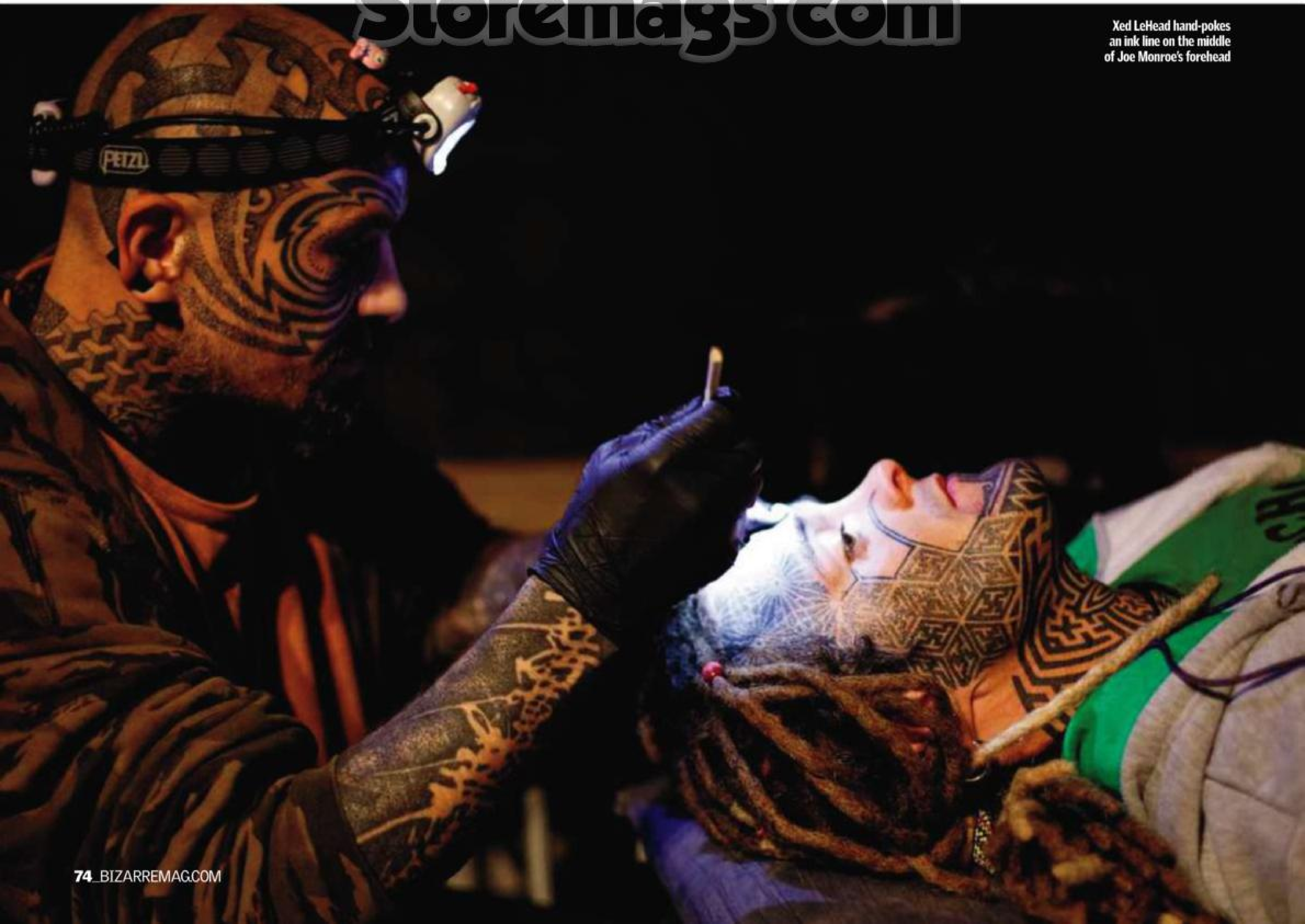
Fascinated by the technique, Colin tried it out on himself in 1998. "It was hard to do, but my Mum was a seamstress by trade so she helped me. I usually thread with sinew – tendon from an animal – although it's not easy to find so I often use cotton. The Inuit originally used sharpened bone to break the skin, but they began using metal needles when they were introduced to them by foreigners."

While demand for hand-sewed tattoos is small, Colin hopes that today's Inuits will pick up the technique again, and bring it back to life. "The last Inuit woman I know who had this type of tattoo, died in 2005," he says. "This method doesn't make up the bulk of my work – I use other hand tattoo methods as well – but I want to make people aware of dying tattoo traditions."

"Today, Inuits are downtrodden and seen as less intelligent than immigrant Canadians. It's as though they've lost pride in their own culture. But there is so much to it, it'd be great if an Inuit started tattooing in the old way again," he muses.

Animal magic

Another man on a mission to revive spiritual tattooing is Durga, from Indonesia. Although →



Xed LeHead hand-pokes an ink line on the middle of Joe Monroe's forehead

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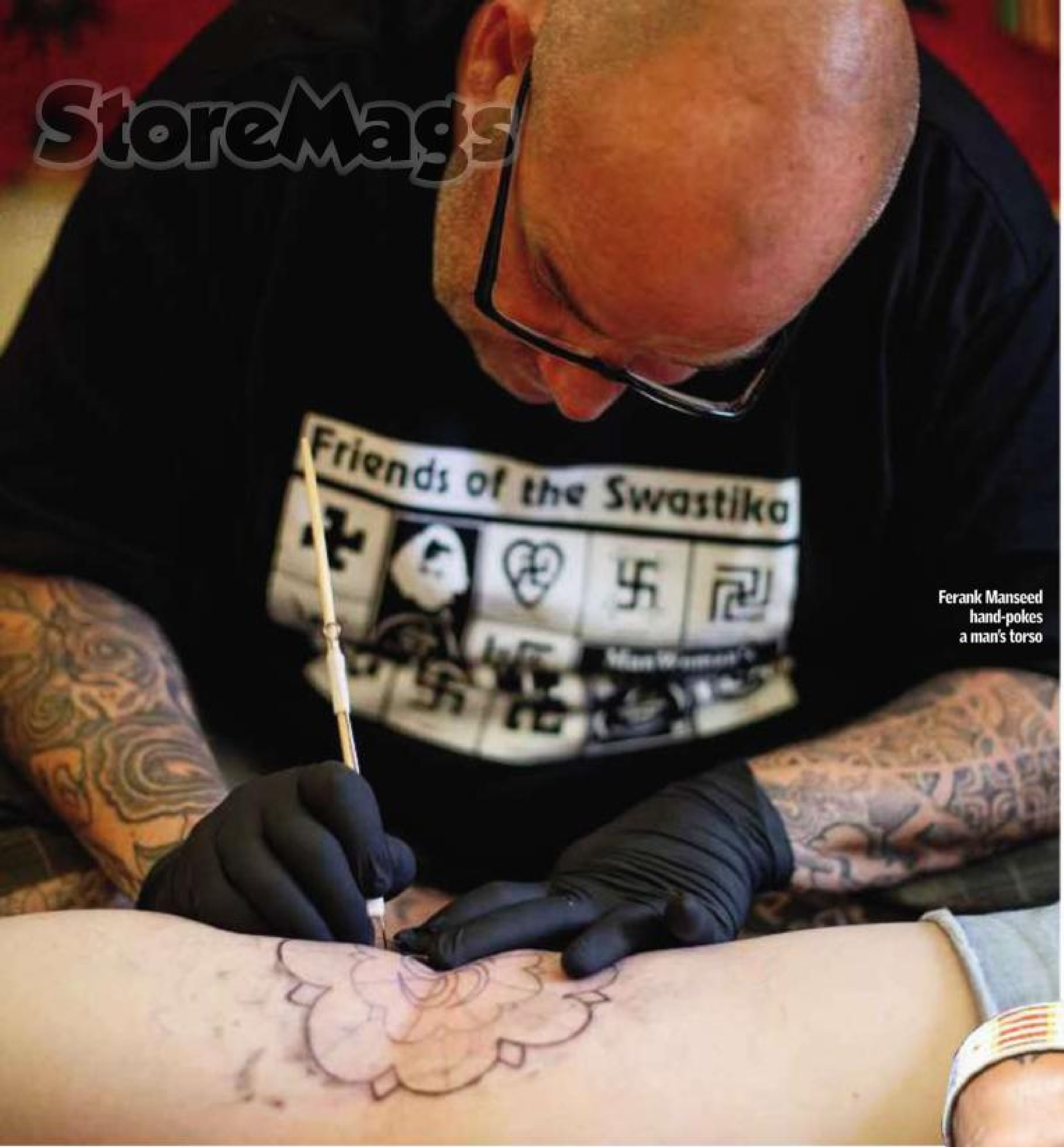
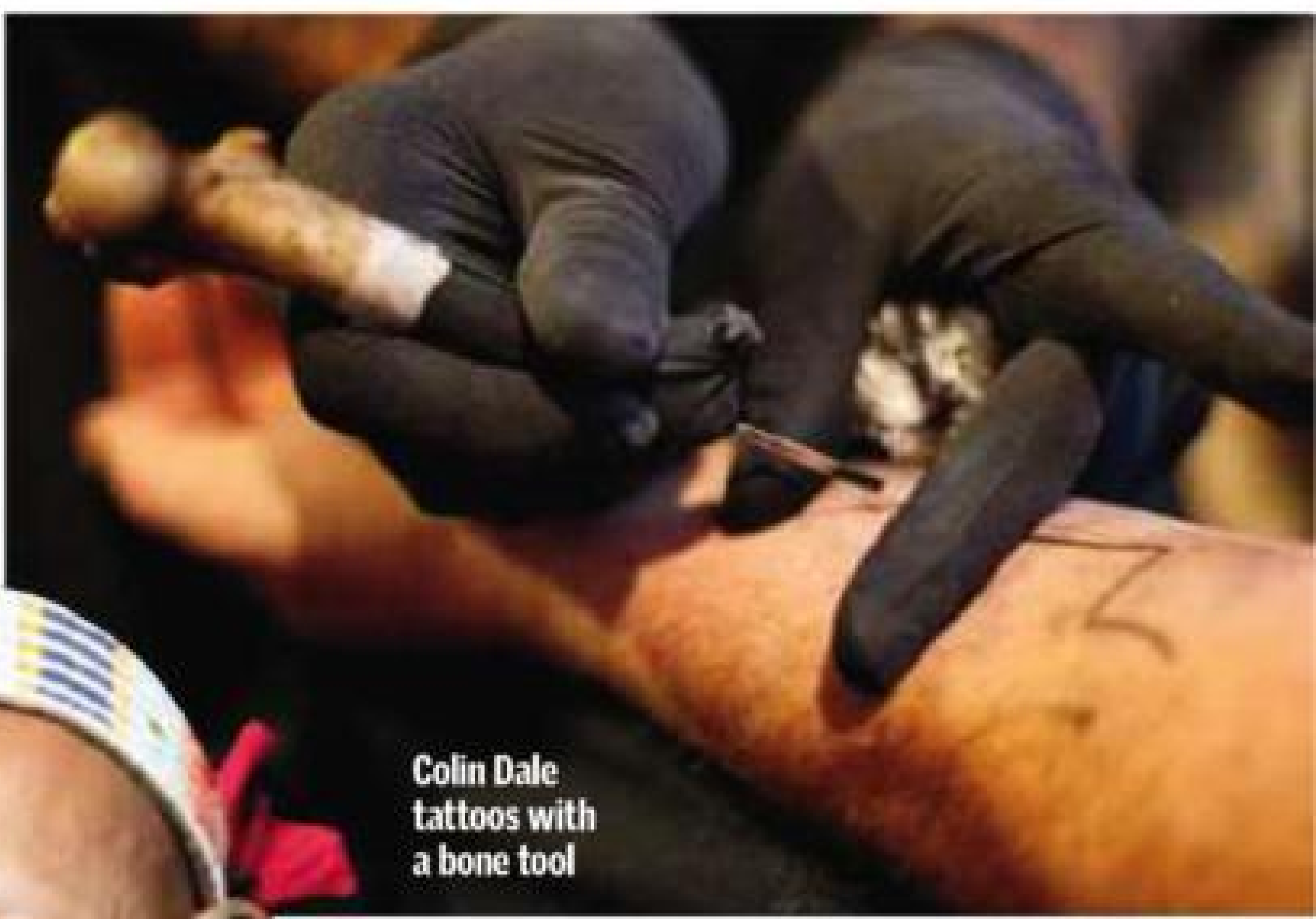
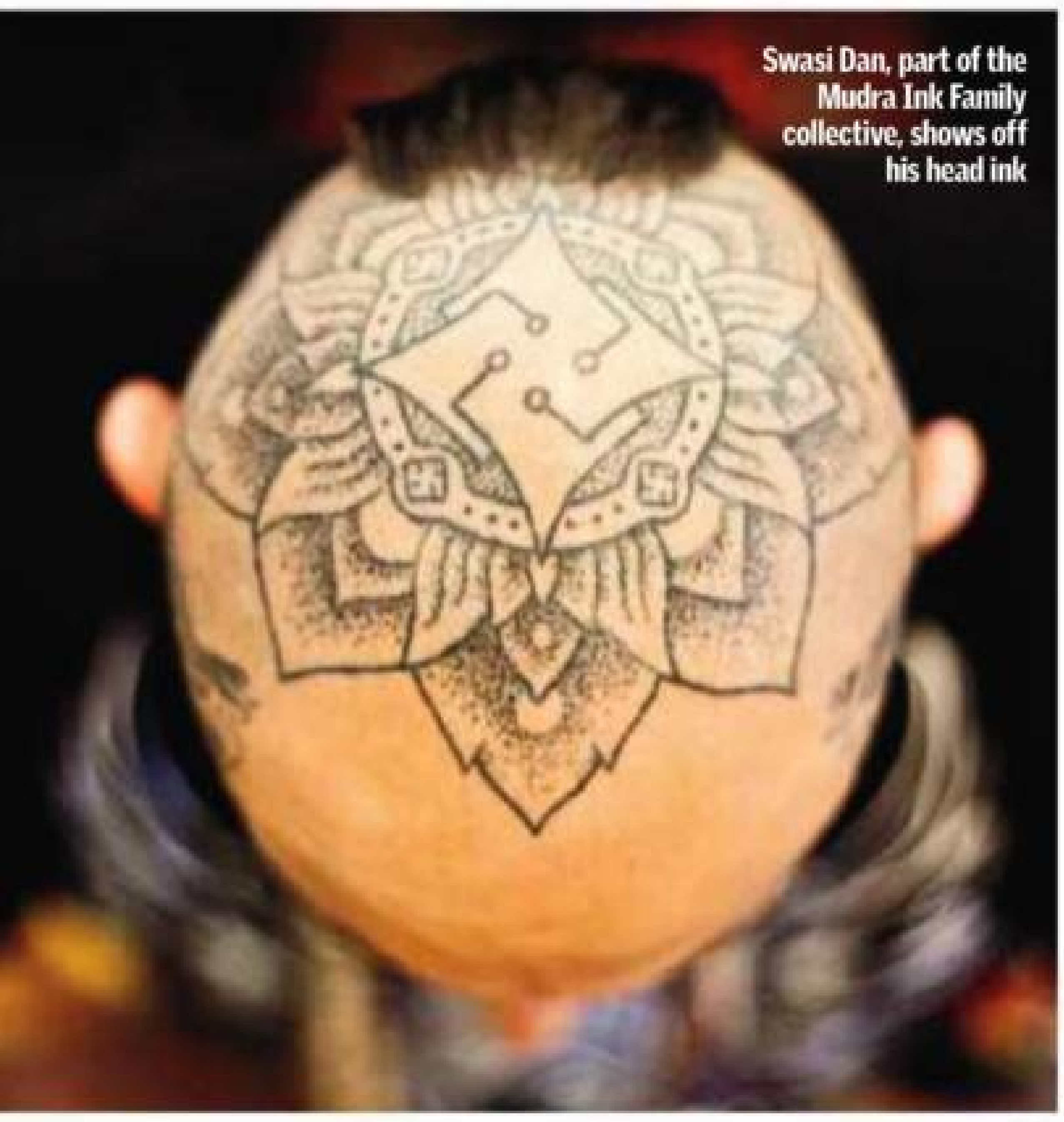


Ferank Manseed hand-pokes a man's torso

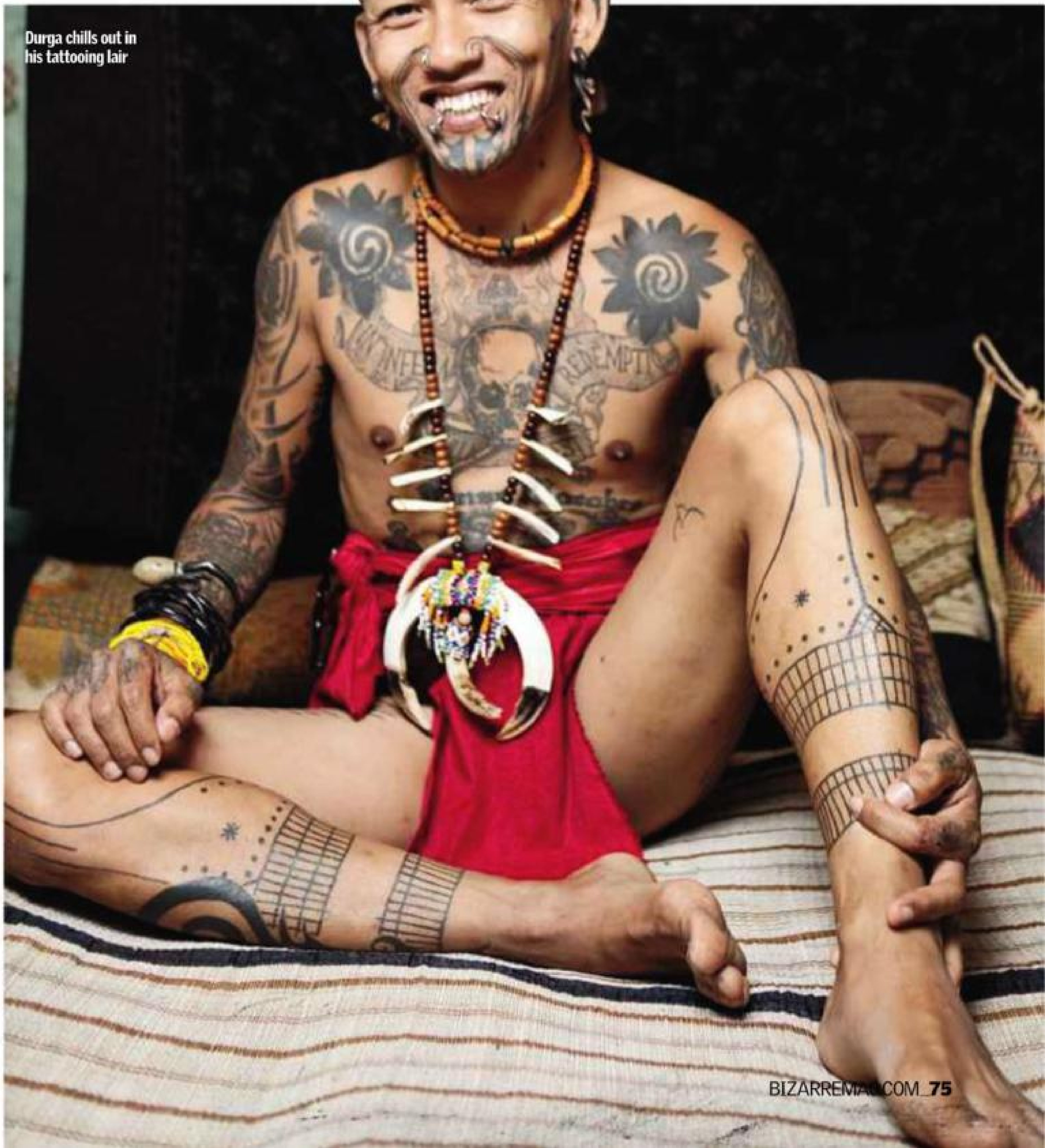
Helen Marriott and her handywork



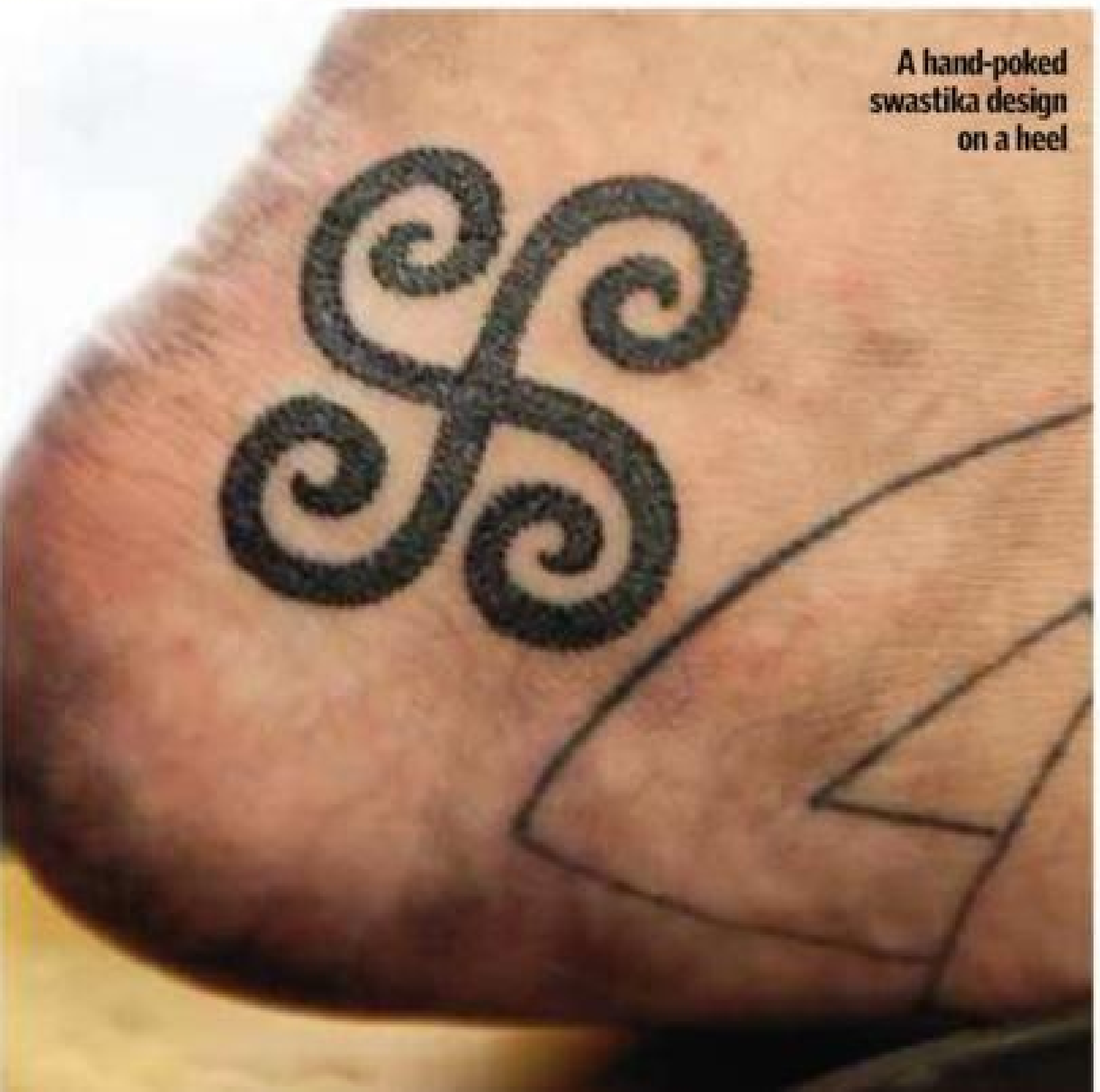
Colin Dale tattoos with a bone tool



Swasi Dan, part of the Mudra Ink Family collective, shows off his head ink



Durga chills out in his tattooing lair



A hand-poked swastika design on a heel

Traditional ink enthusiast Jack Denney

he runs a tattoo studio in Jakarta, he took time out from doing machine work to live with tribes in neighbouring islands, and learn the art of hand-tapping.

"Historically, in this region, tattoos were reserved for the royal family, but some were for hunters, healers or Shamen. All of the tattoos relate to religion or nature," explains Durga. "Animism was important to these people – the idea that souls and spirits are everywhere in the natural environment; in animals, plants, rocks, mountains and rivers."

Durga practices the Mentawai and Borneo Kalimantan traditions, which are done using two wooden sticks; a short one with a sterile needle at one end – although buffalo horn or wood would have been used before needles were available – and a second stick, which is used to manually tap the first and push the needle into the skin. The tattooist also needs an assistant, or 'skin stretcher', who's responsible for keeping the client's skin spread taut during the process.

"When I travel to Europe or Australia, I find that more and more people want to get tattooed with hand-tapping. They respect it more in the West than in my own country because everyone back home wants to be more modern. I want to encourage Indonesian tattoo artists to pay more attention to our traditional ways of tattooing, not just copy what they read in western magazines."

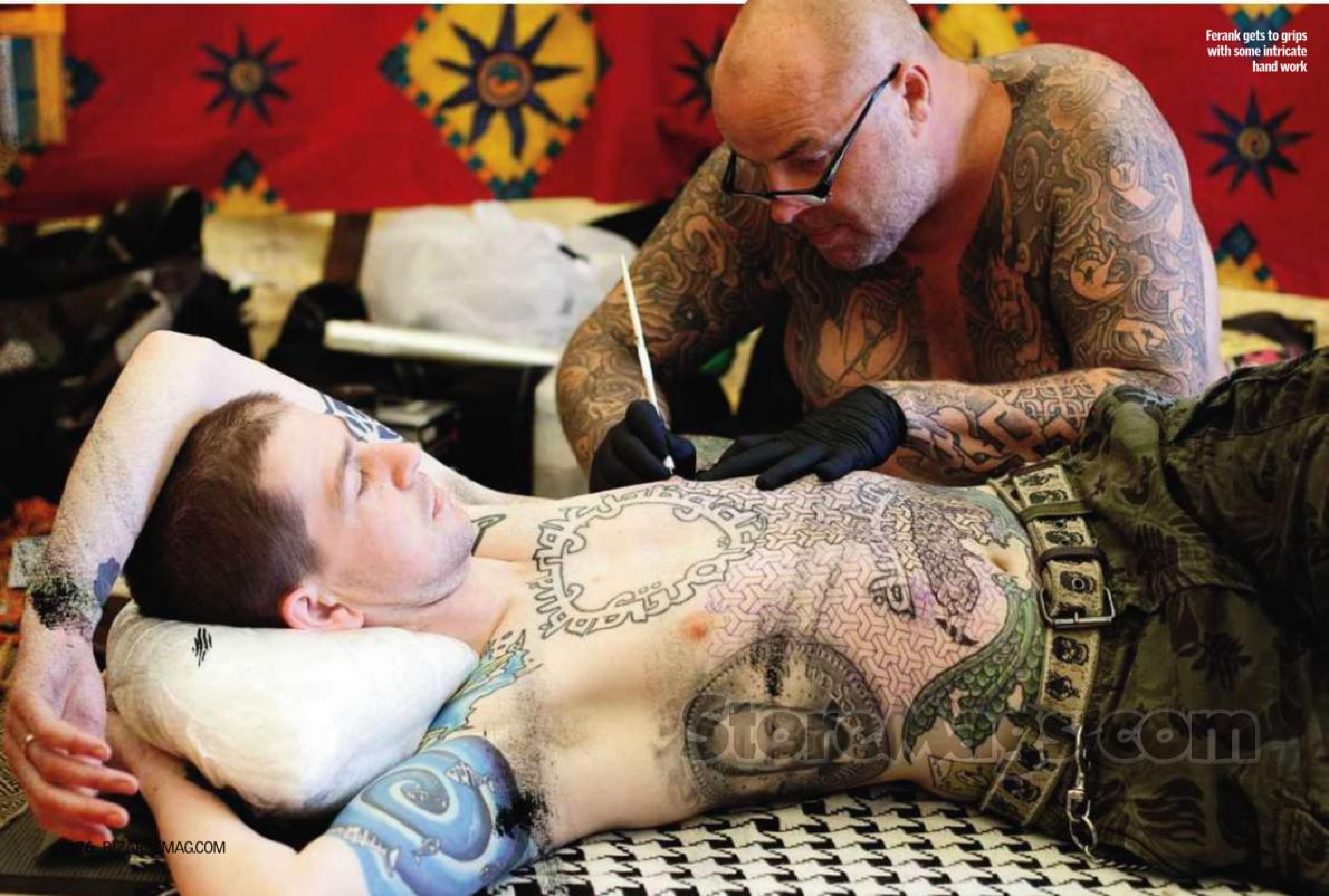
The process involved in any type of hand-tattooing, especially for larger, more intricate pieces, requires incredible patience, concentration and accuracy, virtues that Ferank feels is out of step with modern values.

"Tattooing has changed so much," he says. "Recently, someone came to me asking for a star. I told them, 'Sure, I can do a star for you, but it's like going into a tailor and asking them to make you a handkerchief. You don't know what I'm capable of, I can do intricate dot work that takes 15 hours just to get the tones and grade right.'"

Compare this to the lads asking Ferank to give them the same sleeves as David Beckham and you can see how the magical connection associated with hand-tattoos is incomparable to the trend-followers who want a quick ink fix.

"I was able to tattoo someone under their favourite tree, a place that meant something personal to them," says Ferank. "I've also helped a couple tattoo each other with love dots. When you make art like poetry, dance, theatre or music, you try to give it life so that people can connect with it, but every tattoo that I do for someone – even if it's just a single dot – has life. It has a past, a present, a future, a philosophy, a thought, it has the capacity to change the world. For me, it's the most exciting artistic medium in the world."

"Every tattoo that I do, even if it's just a single dot, has life; a past, a present and a future"



Ferank gets to grips with some intricate hand work

HAND-SEWING

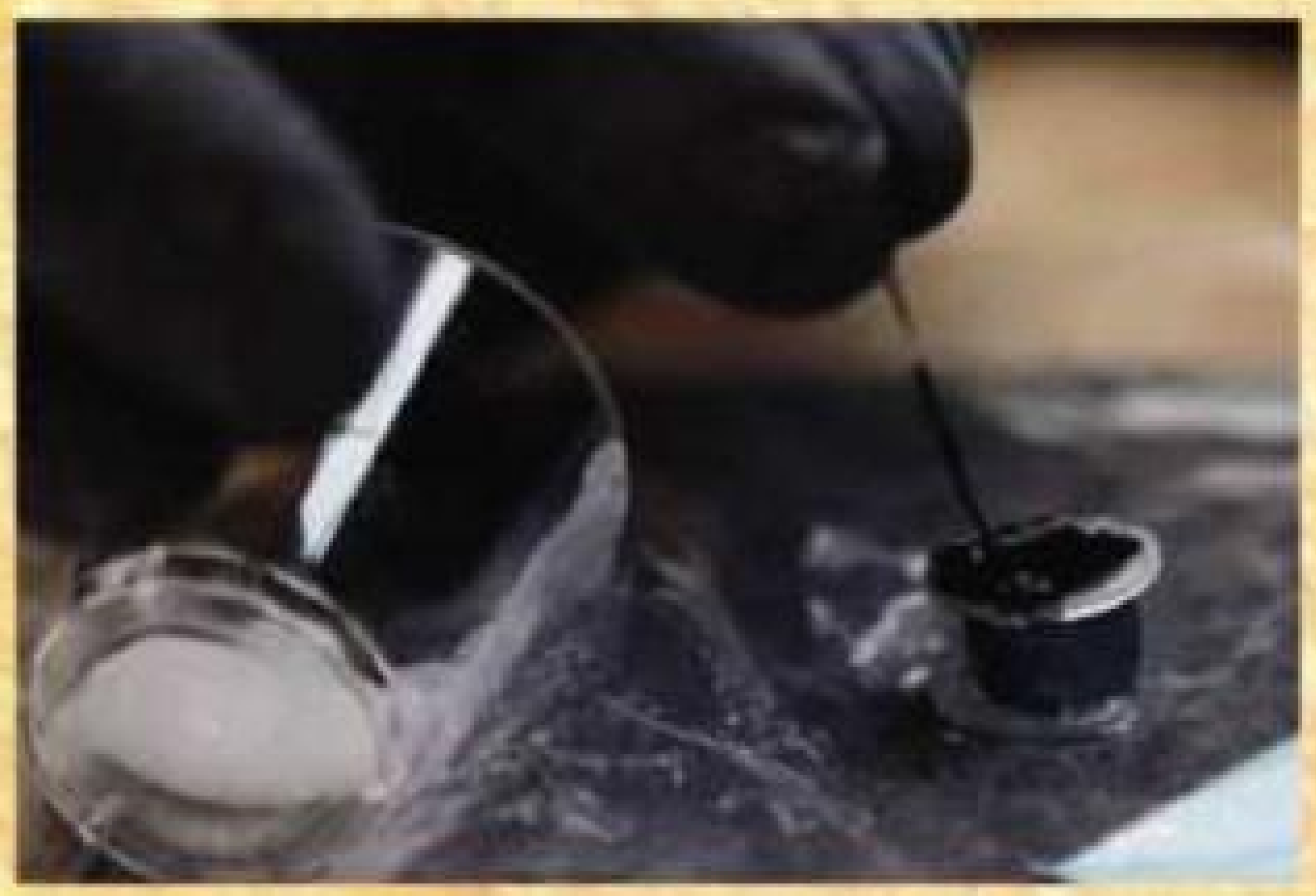
Colin Dale

Canadian tattooist Colin Dale shows us the ancient Inuit needle-and-thread technique

Skinandbone.dk

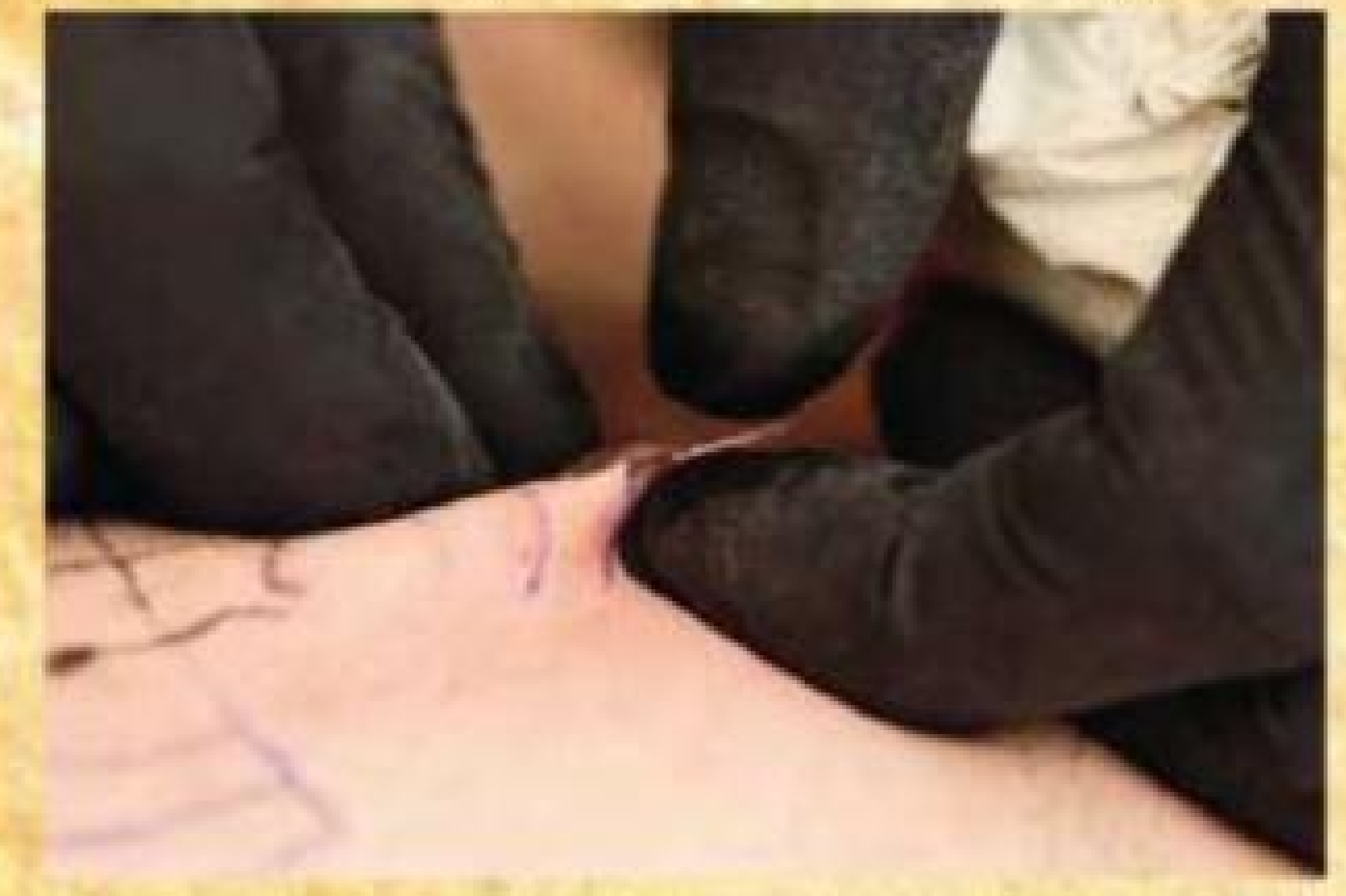
Step one

Cotton is threaded on to a needle, then dipped in ink to coat it with pigment



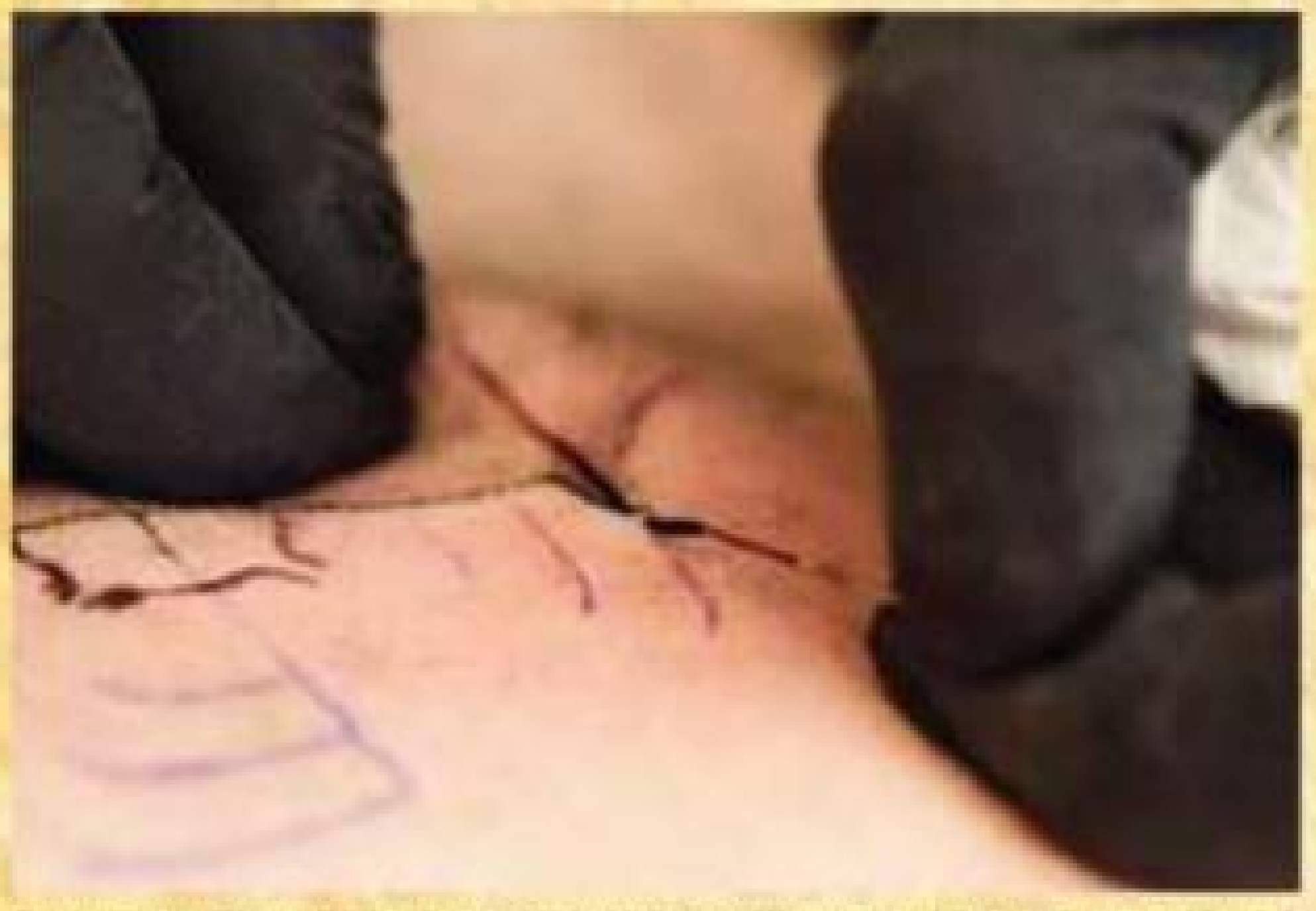
Step two

The needle and thread is pushed a quarter of an inch into the skin, leaving ink at the entry point



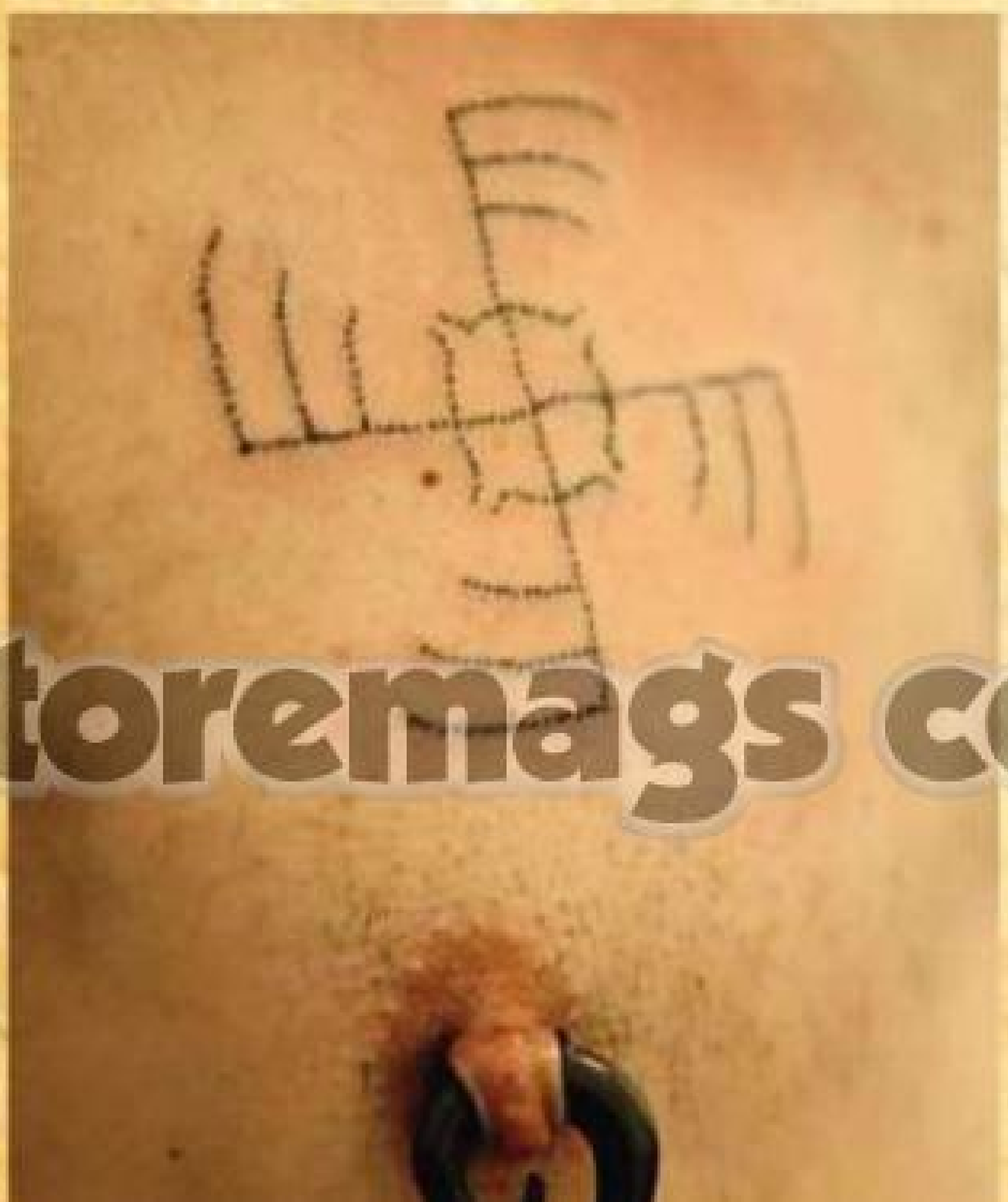
Step three

The needle and thread is pulled out through the skin, leaving a dot of ink at the exit point



Finished Tattoo

The end product is a series of threaded dots sewn into the skin



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HAND-POKING

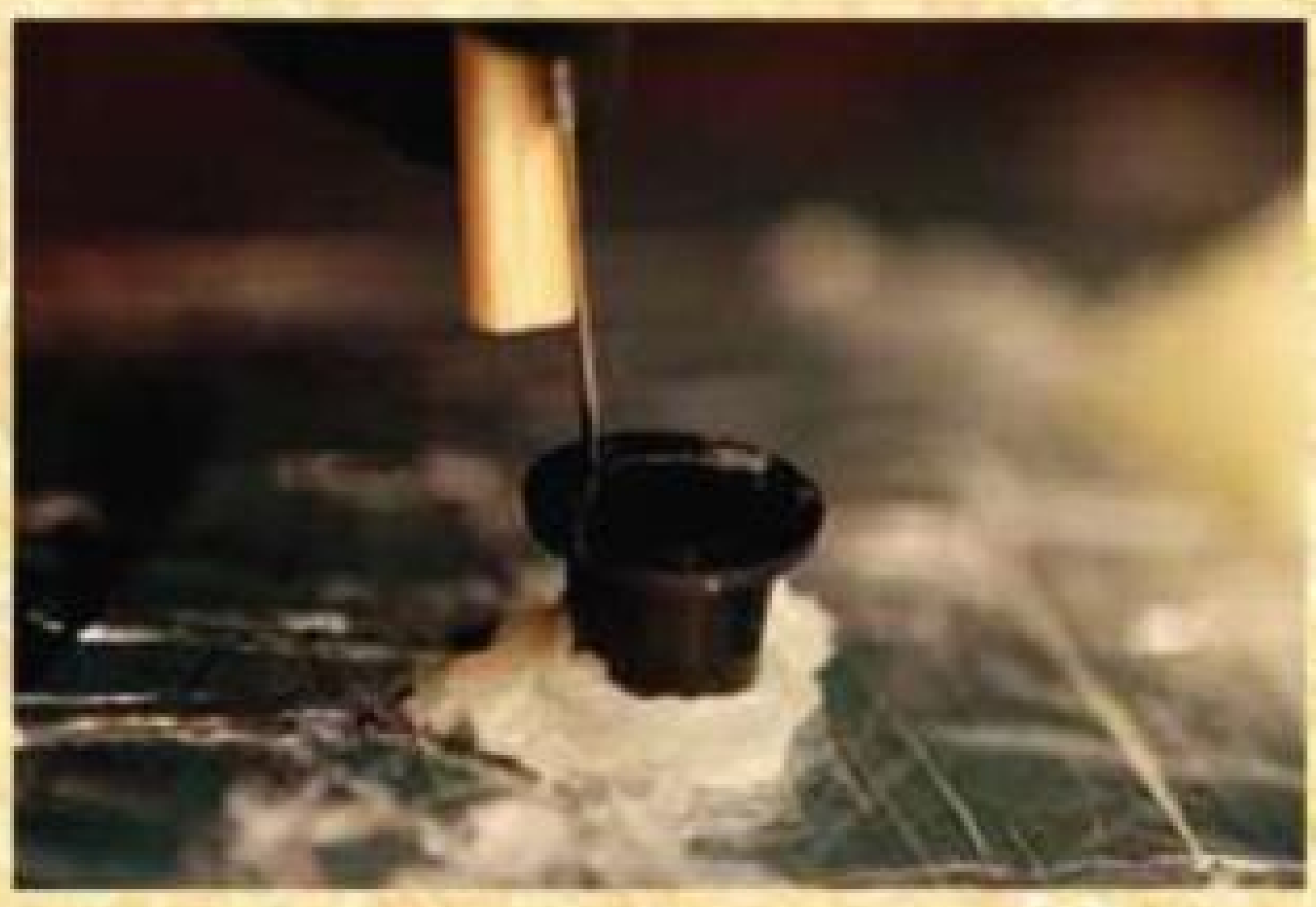
Sakura

Edinburgh-based hand tattooist Sakura reveals the secrets of traditional fleshwork

Mudraink.blogspot.com

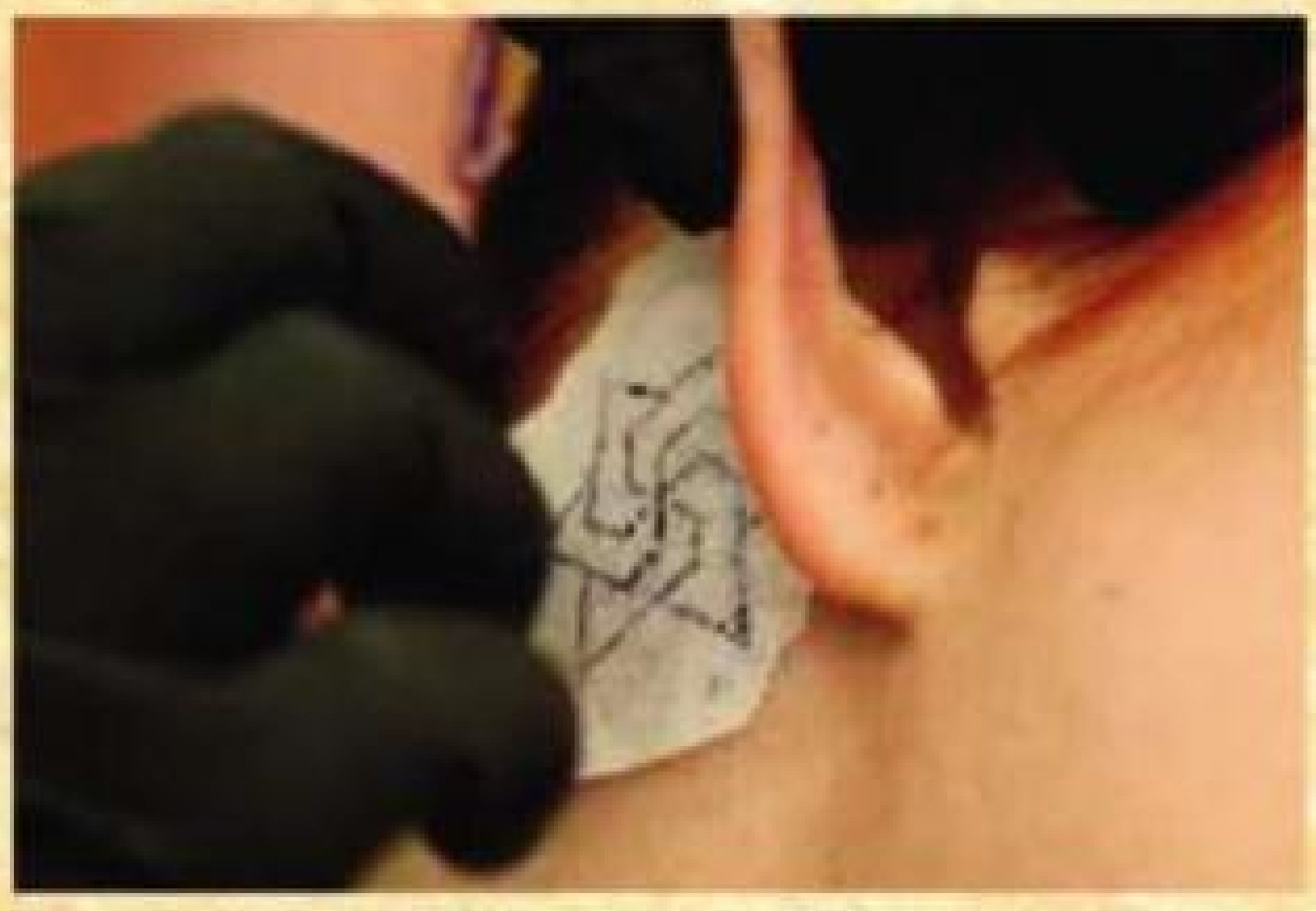
Step one

A sterile needle is secured to a piece of wood, such as a chopstick



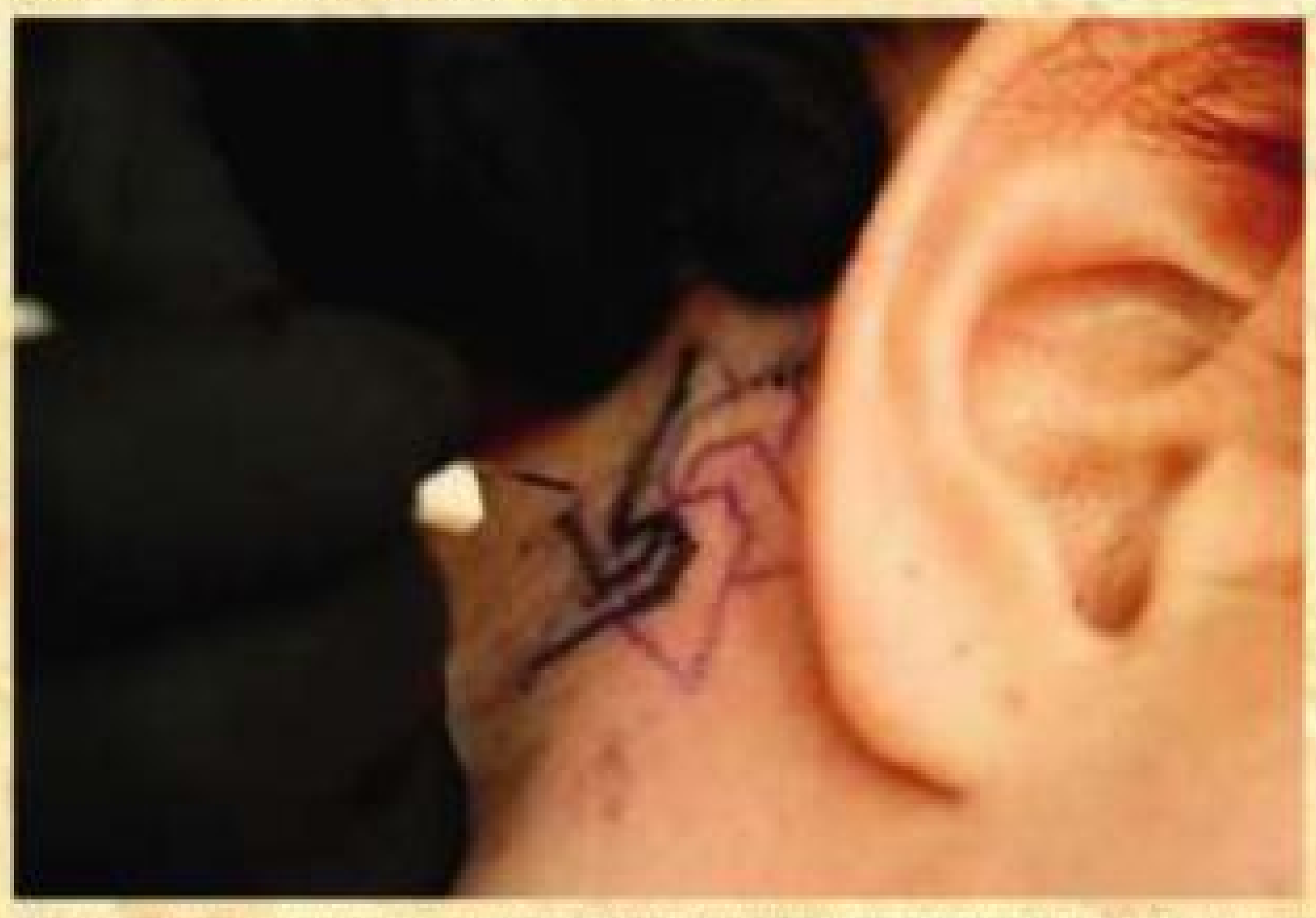
Step two

A design is drawn on to transfer paper, which is placed on the skin and peeled back



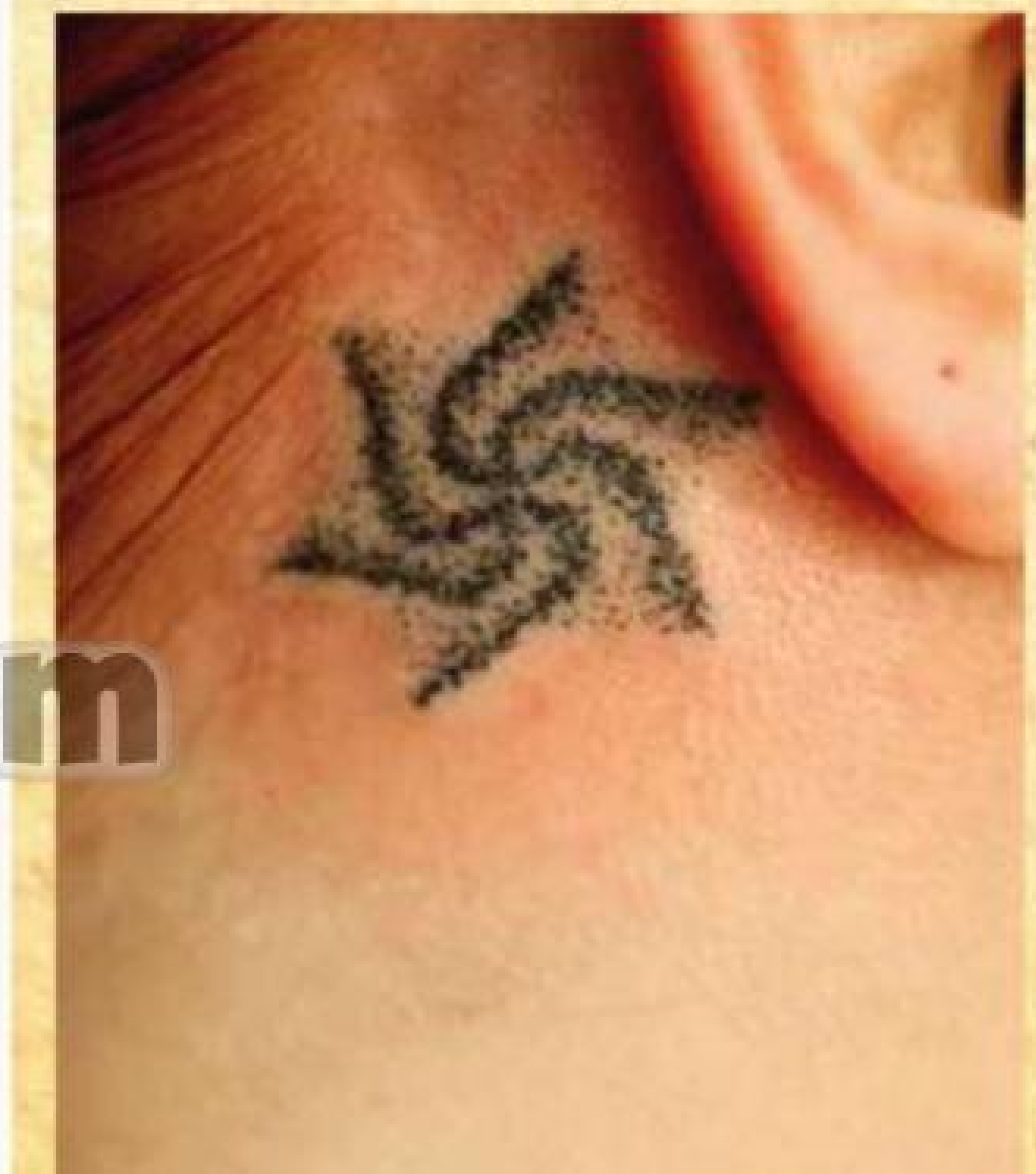
Step three

The needle point is repeatedly pricked into the skin, leaving a permanent dot



Finished Tattoo

The completed design is made up of a concentration of many tiny dots



HAND-TAPPING

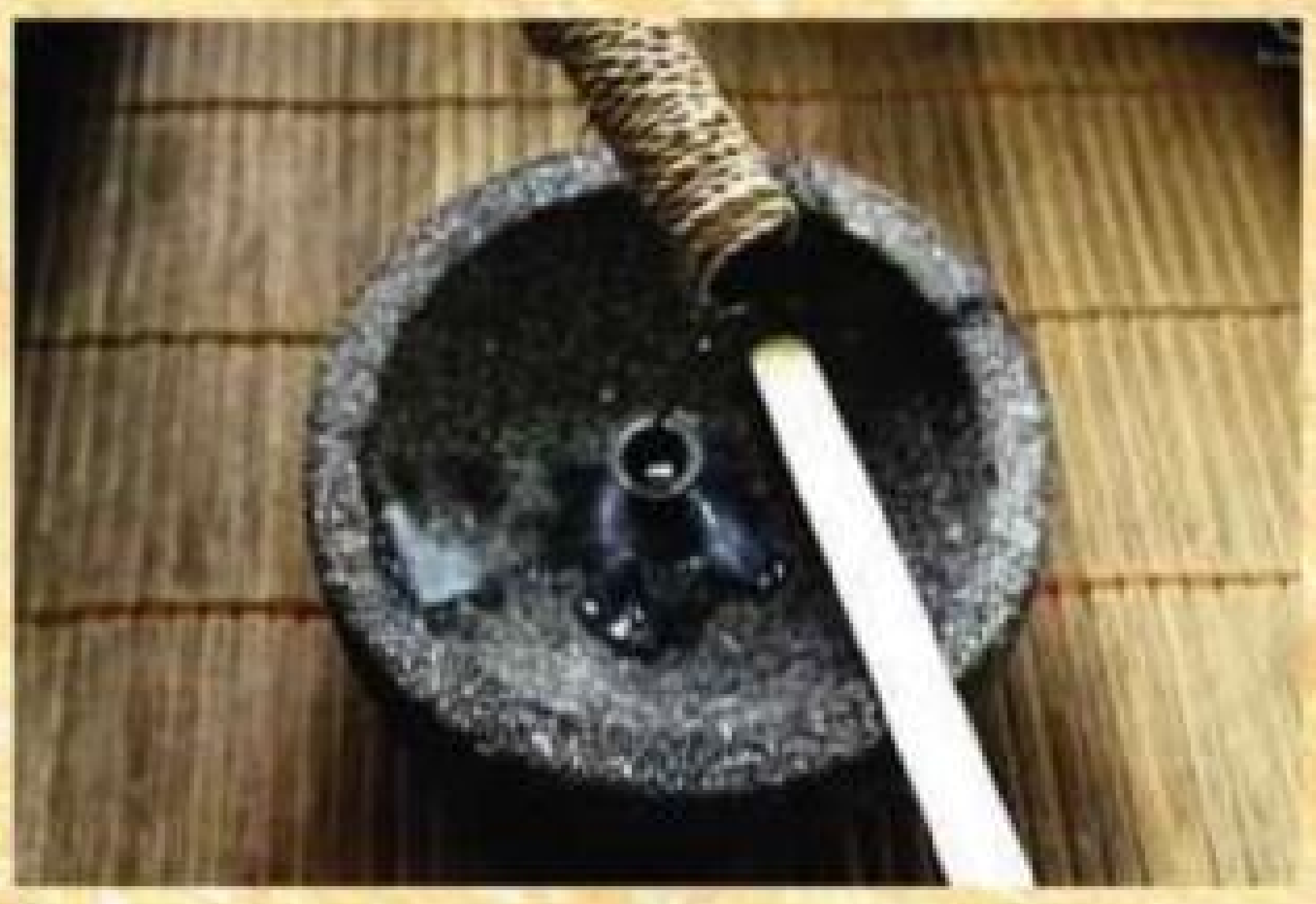
Durga

Indonesian artist Durga creates tribal ink

Durgatattoo.com

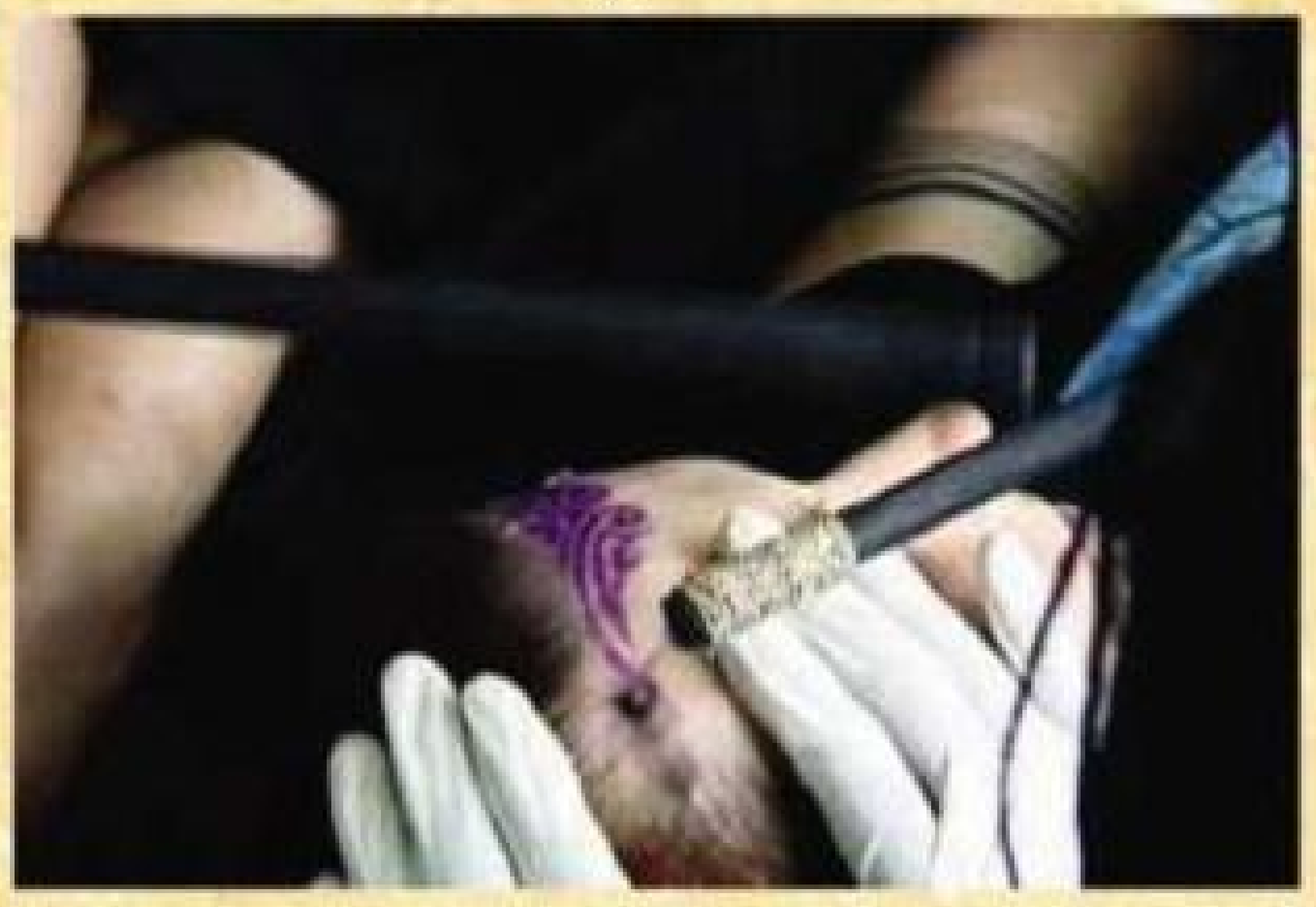
Step one

The needle is secured into a wooden stick, then dipped in ink



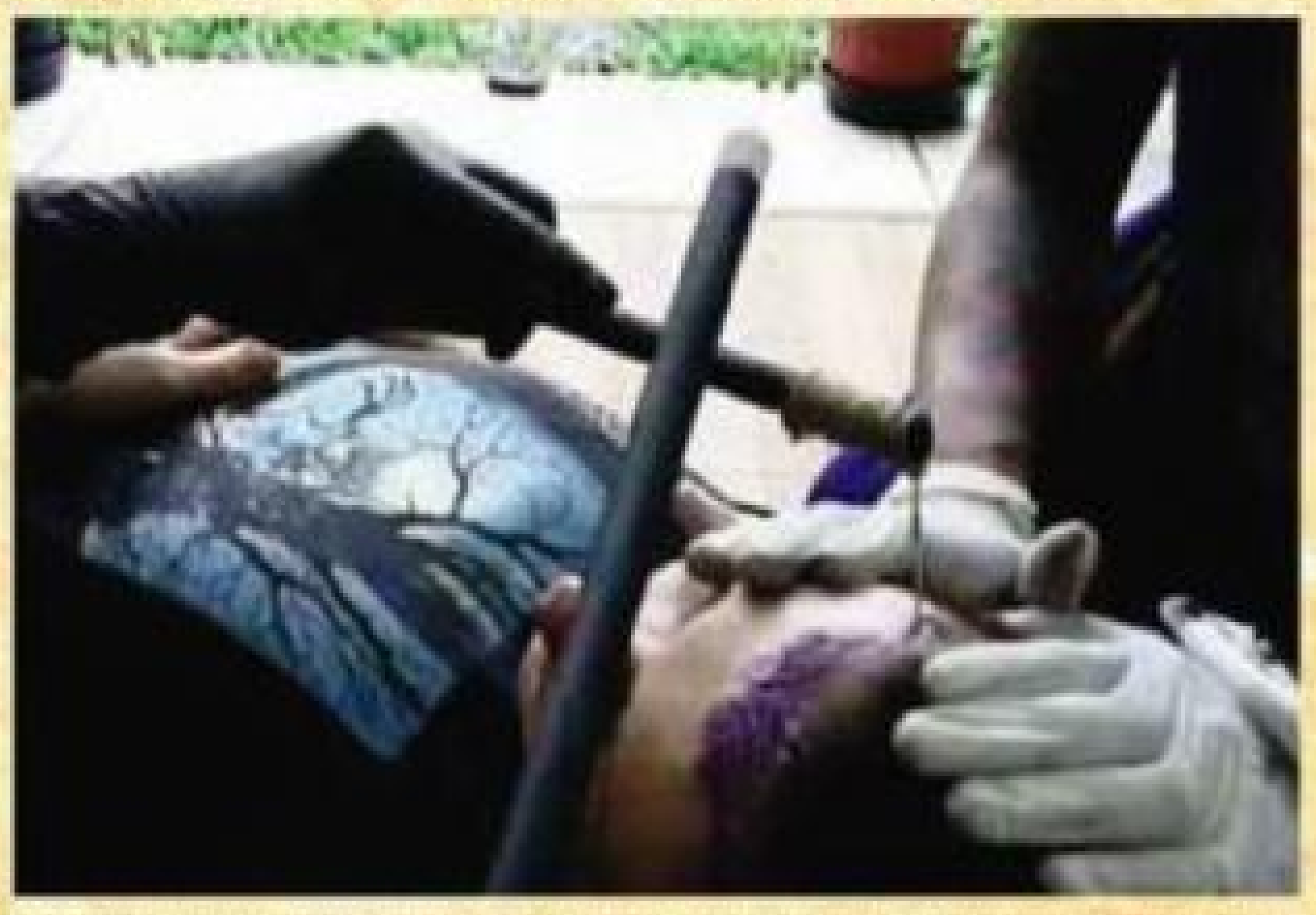
Step two

The skin is held taut by a 'stretcher' while the tattooist inks the design



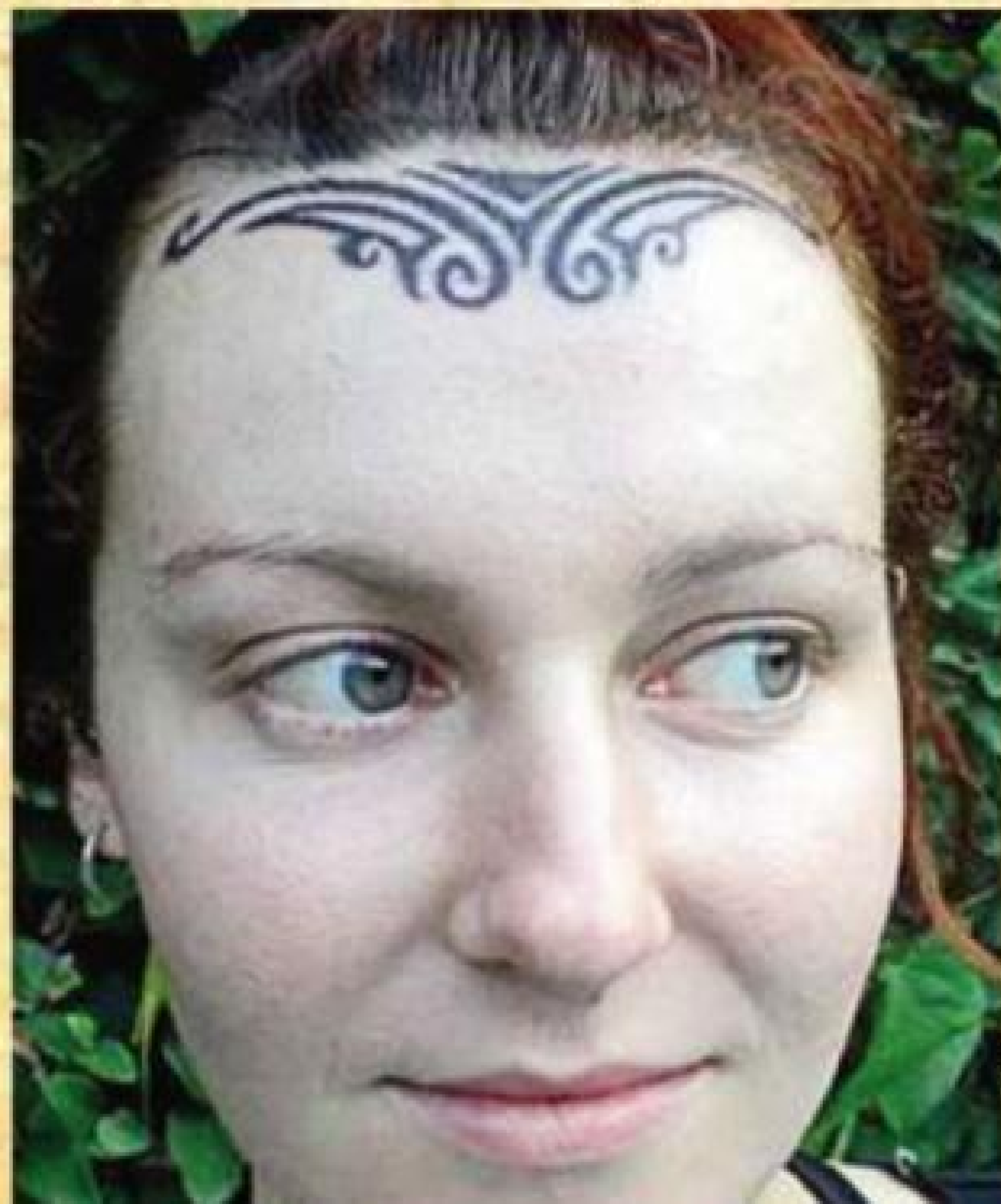
Step three

The ink-covered needle is repeatedly tapped with a second stick to drive ink into the skin



Finished Tattoo

The completed design shows how hand-tapping can produce swirls and flowing lines



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Prince of Darkness

Meet the archangel of ink and explore the demons lurking in his skull

WORDS **CIARAN MCCAULEY**
PHOTOS **NEVILLE ELDER**

Tattoo artist Paul Booth is angry. He doesn't sound it – even when describing the depths of his fury on subjects such as religion (one of his favourites), his abusive sixth grade teacher or the tattoo industry, his speech remains mellow, at ease and wryly amused. He never rants or raises his voice. Instead, Paul's rage is intoned in controlled, breezily cool comments. "Sure," he admits, "it's bizarre that I've built my success on dark feelings. It's a strange place to exist."

Paul's been tattooing for over 20 years, and his demonic black and grey designs are popular with metal royalty such as Slayer, Slipknot and Pantera. *Rolling Stone* magazine declared him "the new king of rock tattoo" and his Last Rites Tattoo Theatre base in New York is a successful art hangout for what he describes as his "dark family". Every great artist needs a muse, and Paul's is darkness. "There are demons driving my needles," he confides. "Rather than sitting on my arse it's better for me to battle demons. I need to feed that urge." →

The 43-year-old from New Jersey, USA, has plenty of demons to wrestle with given his difficult childhood and wayward teenage years. He says he had a "weird, middle-class, neglected upbringing", and he hates his father for being absent while his mother worked two jobs to keep the family going. By the time Paul hit his late teens he'd become a repo man who stole cars. "It was a bit of a death wish lifestyle, and if I'd stayed in it I wouldn't have seen 30," he states, matter-of-factly.

However, Paul's life changed at 18, when he became a father, and his first tattoo was his daughter's name – Tabitha – with a rose, on his arm. "It was a typical Jersey Boy design, but I asked the artist to customise it so I wouldn't end up sitting next to some guy in a bar, looking like an asshole because I had the same tattoo as him," he says.

After that ink initiation, Paul was hooked. "I was intrigued by how the tattoo came together," he says. "It blew my mind." Paul began an apprenticeship at a shop called the Tattoo Factory, where he learned the ethics and traditions of inking, and developed his art. A year later, he lost his job after moving to California to live with his dying father. "He got in touch with me and, as much as I hated him, I went to see him," Paul remembers. "I went because I had some shit to say to him rather than because I cared for him, but when I got there, I stayed. I said some things I needed to say, he said some things he needed to say, and we got on for the first time ever."

A design for life

Paul's tattoo break came in 1991 when he completed an elaborate back piece – from shoulders to thighs, complete with Paul's trademark demons and ripped skin – on his then girlfriend, and took it to a convention in Pittsburgh. "When we got there it was surreal; the girl couldn't walk five feet without someone taking a picture. She was hot, which helps," he laughs. "But at that time the scariest tattoo around was a flaming skull." The piece garnered attention and Paul was invited to do an interview with *Tattoo Review* magazine, during which he ripped into the church. "I came straight out of the gate with an attitude, and since then it's been a constant rise at a steady pace," he says.

The tattoo trailblazer's fame rests on his imagery of horror, demons and skulls – a no-holds-barred style Paul says he developed at the Catholic school he attended as a boy. "When I find my old school notebooks they're covered in sketches of monsters and skulls," he says. My upbringing was tough, psychologically, and it certainly fucked me up enough to make me draw those pictures."

Paul's sixth grade schoolteacher also left her mark. "I still wake up gritting my teeth, dwelling on her," he says. "She put me through psychological torment and constant humiliation. She pulled me in front of the class to mock me. She left me with permanent mental scars and filled me with contempt." As a result, Paul still doesn't like being around nuns or priests. "They fill me with anxiety and anger," he explains.

However, Paul has channelled that negativity through his art and the teacher he loathed has become a key element in his work. "Her likeness is in my demons," he says. "I've realised she defined my art – she's the mother of the Booth style." Facing his inner demons enables Paul to create the raw, emotionally compelling work he's known for. "I can't ignore the dark side if I want enlightenment," he says. "Blind faith in the light is the epitome of the Christian fool. I can't live that way. The more I struggle the wiser, stronger and more dangerous I become."

Space in a black hole

That philosophy led Paul to work on a new approach to dark art and he opened Last Rites Tattoo Theatre in New York in 1995. "My clients and myself connect here," he says. "And even though it's dark and creepy, people feel at home, although they can't quite figure out why."

Last Rites is a creative hub and Paul uses the place to write ambient music, pen dramas – he's currently working on a screenplay called *The Damnation Of Faust* – and throw legendary parties. "I had a do there last year to celebrate being in the business 20 years. We had a carving table with meat on it, so we got a naked girl, lay her on vegetables and covered her in beef and fake blood. Then we used tongs to tear the meat off her flesh – it was great, and 12 people stormed out. I like to do theatrical shit and get a rise out of folk. If you get my jokes you'll laugh with me, but if you don't, I'll laugh anyway."

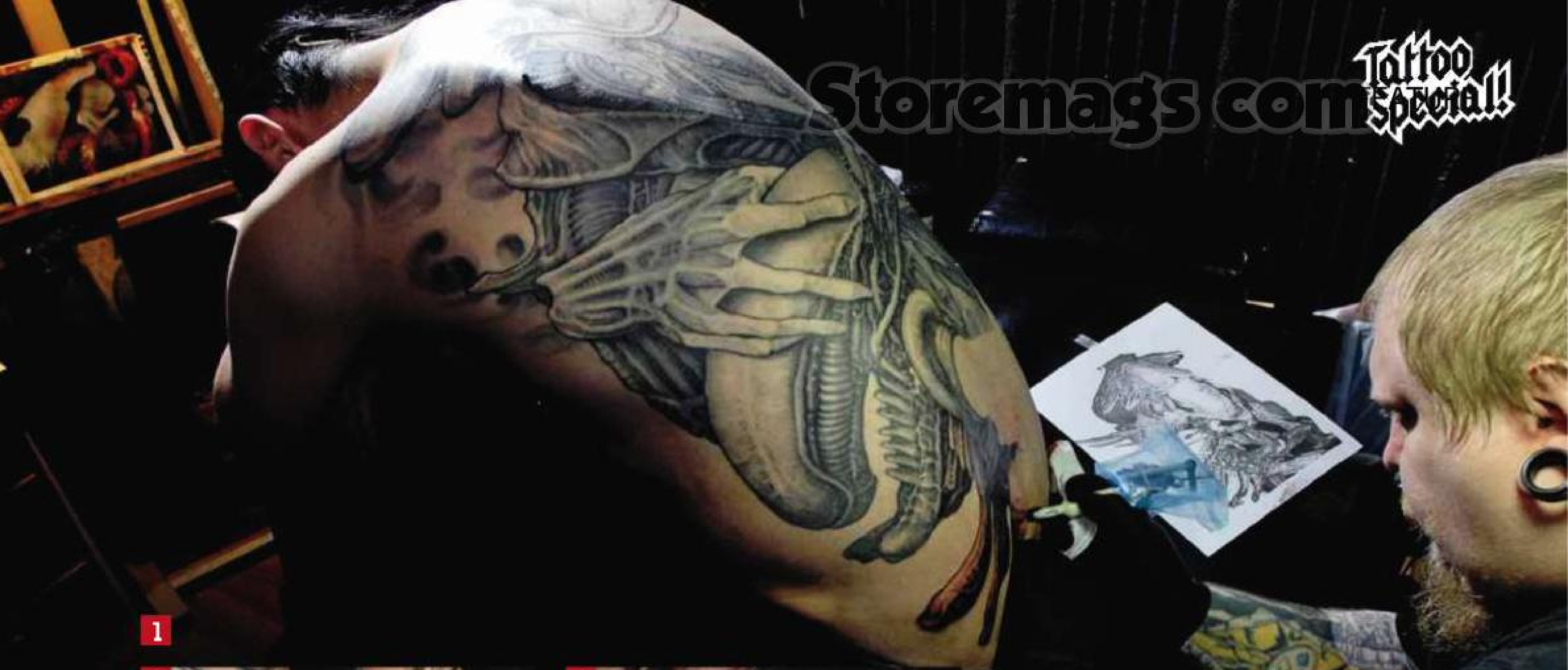
"A guy offered to let me **cut his toes off**, saying they'd never felt like his own, but my lawyer said 'no'"

Slayer, Slipknot and Pantera have all gone under Paul's needle

Paul's worked on dream clients and his favourite was Slayer's Kerry King. Nicholas Cage is also a fan of Paul's work, and the actor would have a Booth original on his scalp now if the studio executives on *Kick-Ass* hadn't kiboshed the idea. "He didn't have the freedom to get the tattoo," sighs Paul. "But he's an awesome guy. It's cool to find out celebrities aren't assholes."

He's also had plenty of weird requests. "One guy offered to let me cut his toes off, saying they never really felt like his own," he recalls. "I called my lawyer and asked 'Can I do this?' Hey, he didn't want them and, as far as I was concerned, there was a jar on my shelf with his toes' names on it! But I was told I couldn't do it."

So, what's next for the ink king? Paul and fellow tattoo artist Brandon Bond are thinking about unleashing a project called Fuelled By Hatred. "The idea is to tell everyone what life's about. We have a lot to bitch about, but we don't know how to yet. Maybe we'll use video." And Paul thinks his career may be moving in a new direction. "I feel like I've come full circle," he says. "I've come from nowhere to everywhere, and now I'm going back to nowhere again, so I'm starting my life over in new ways. But don't worry, it's even darker than it was before!"



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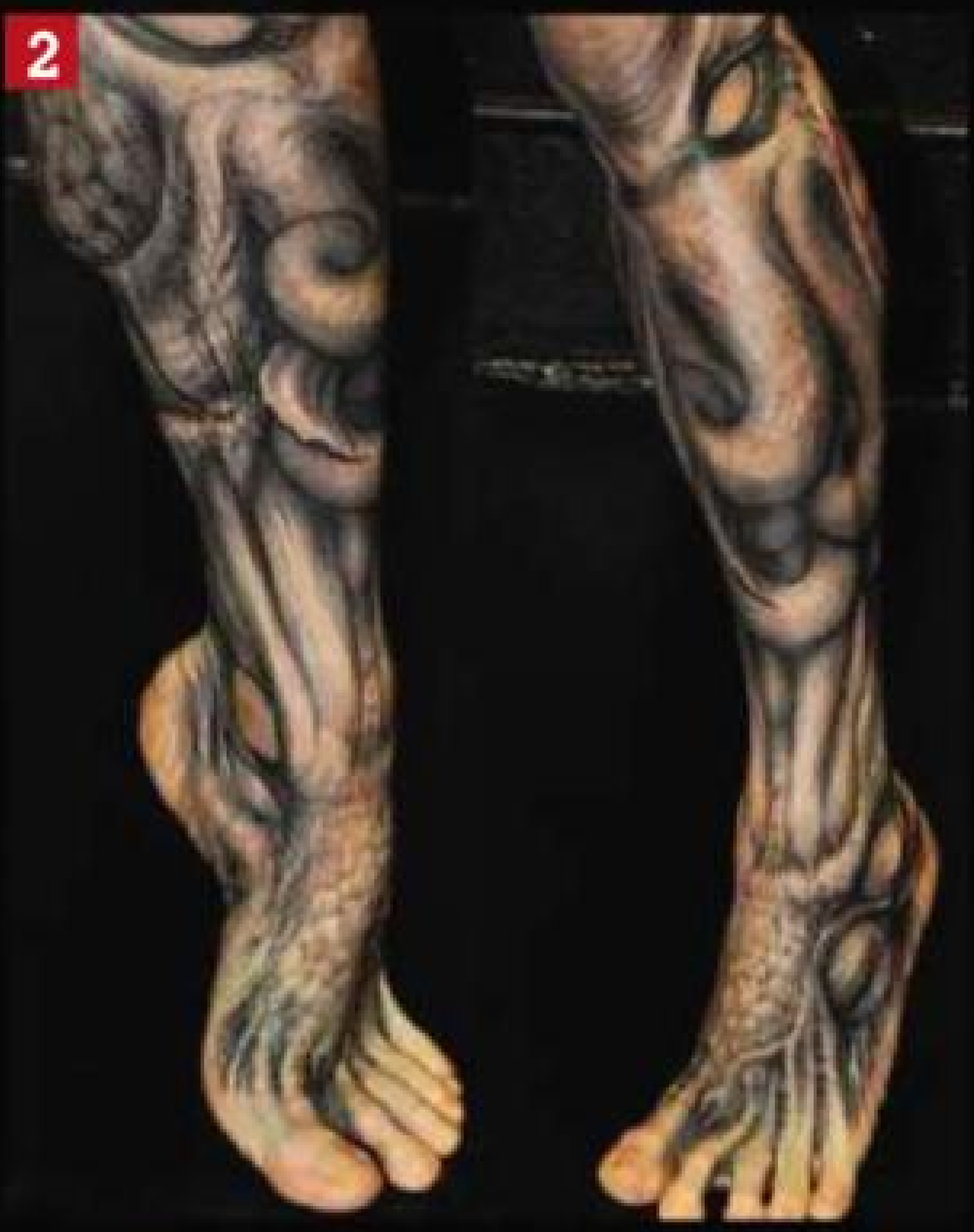

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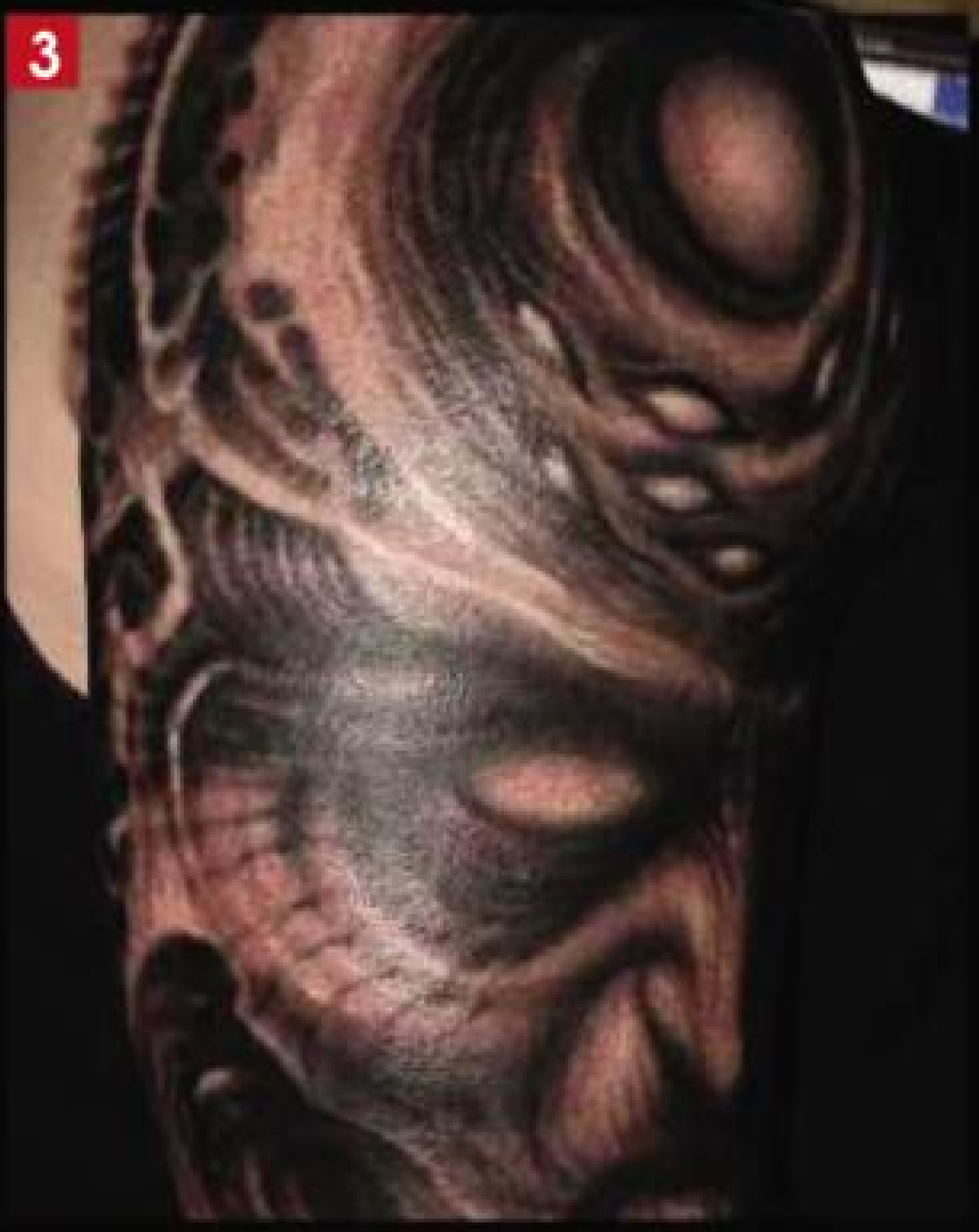

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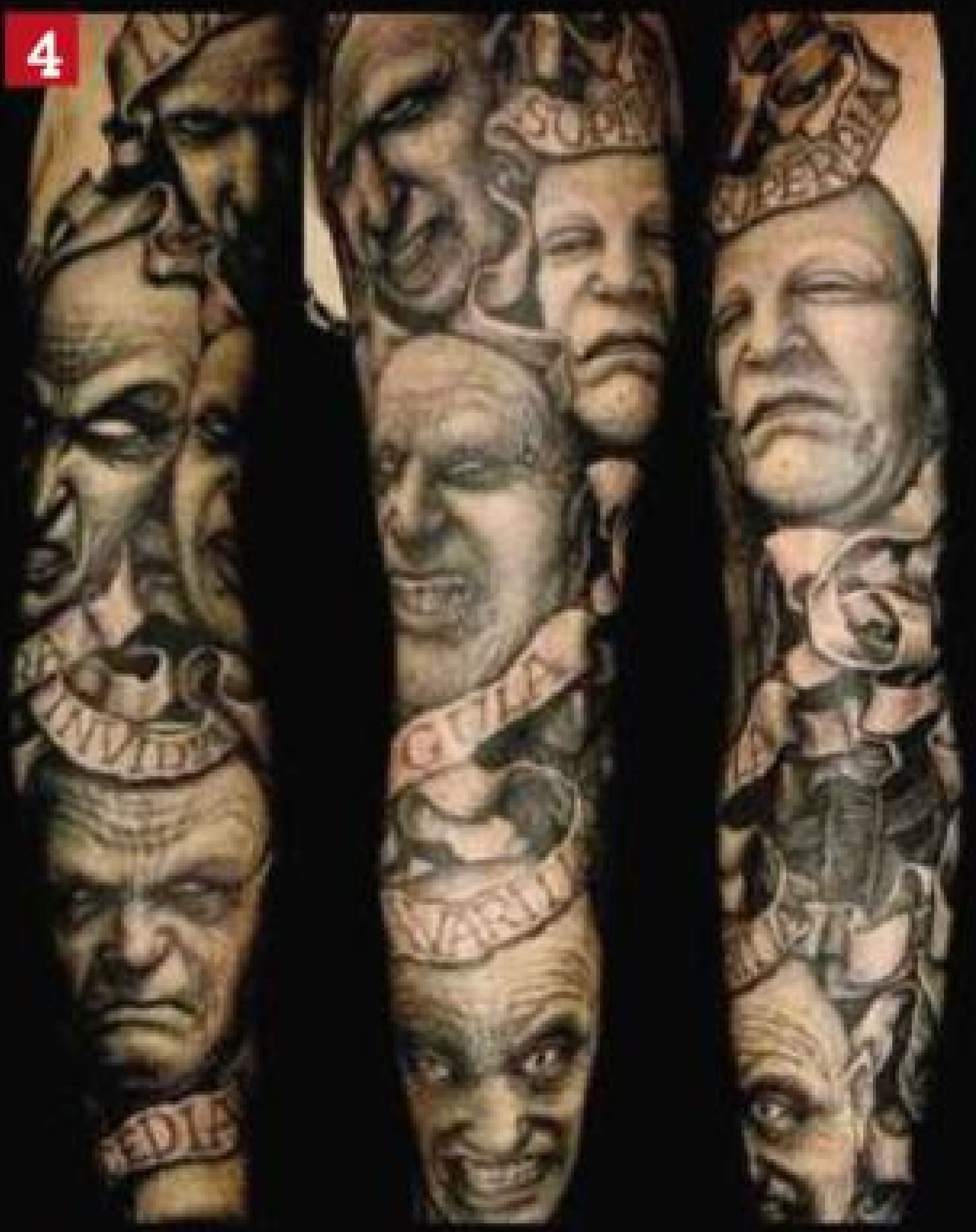

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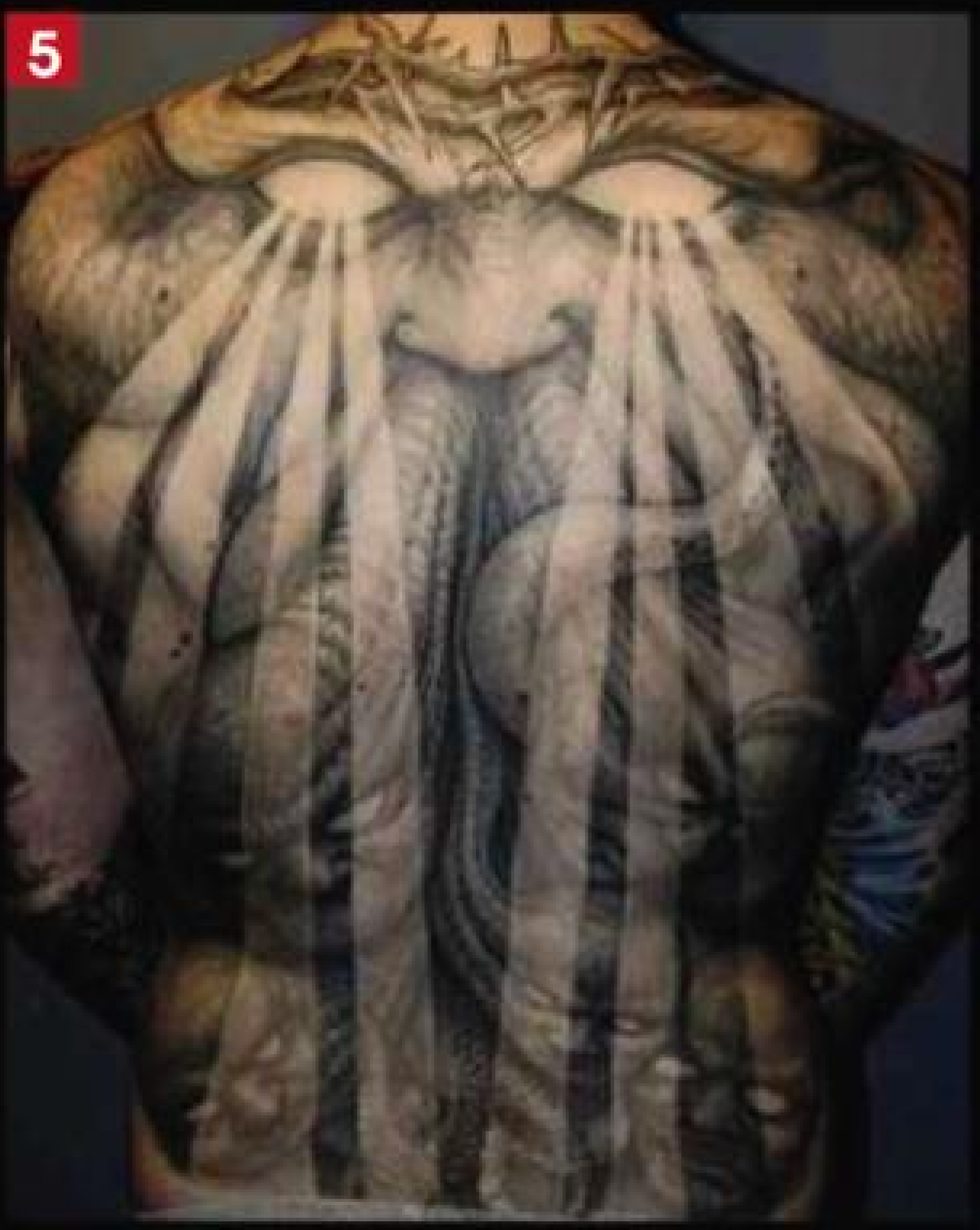

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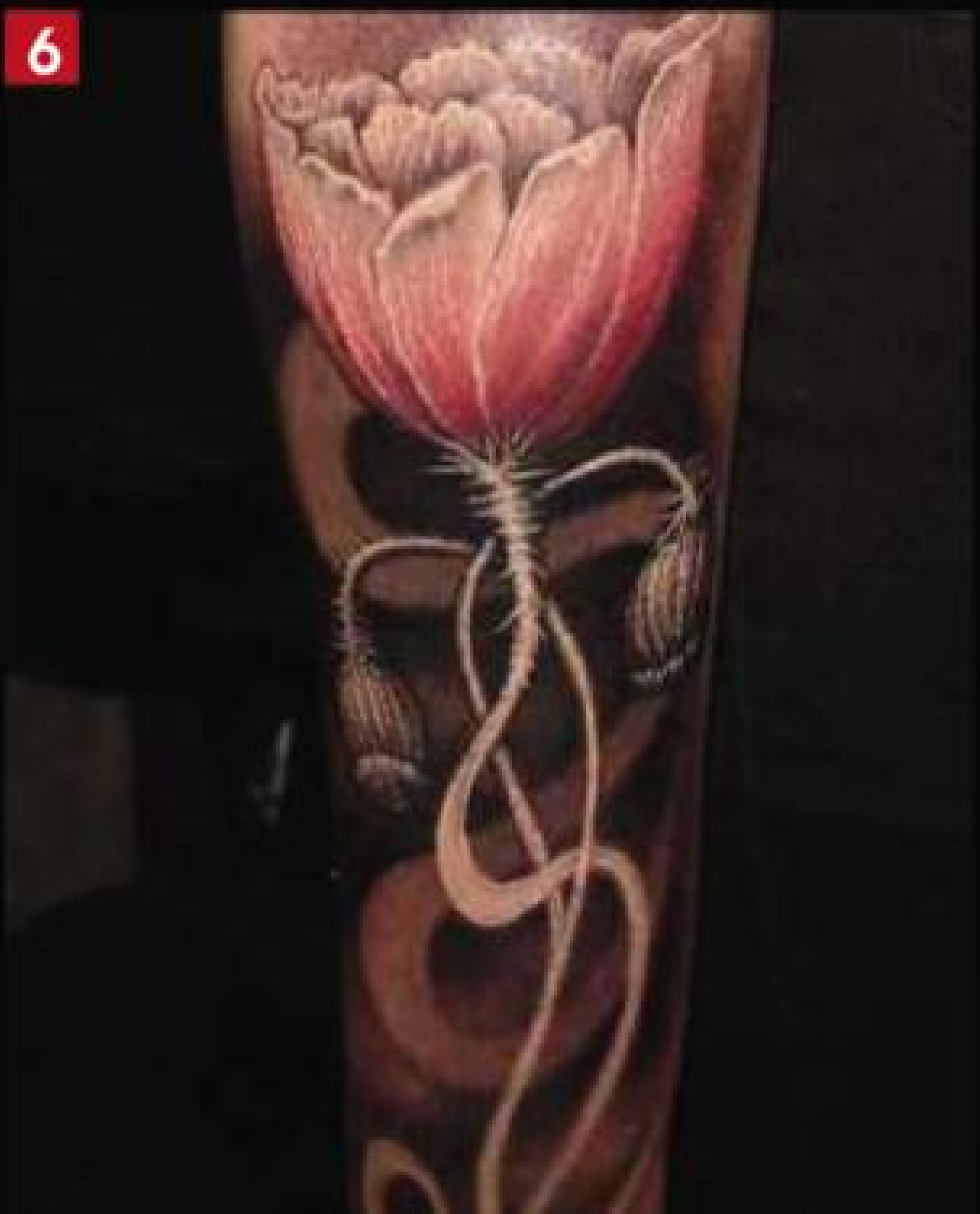

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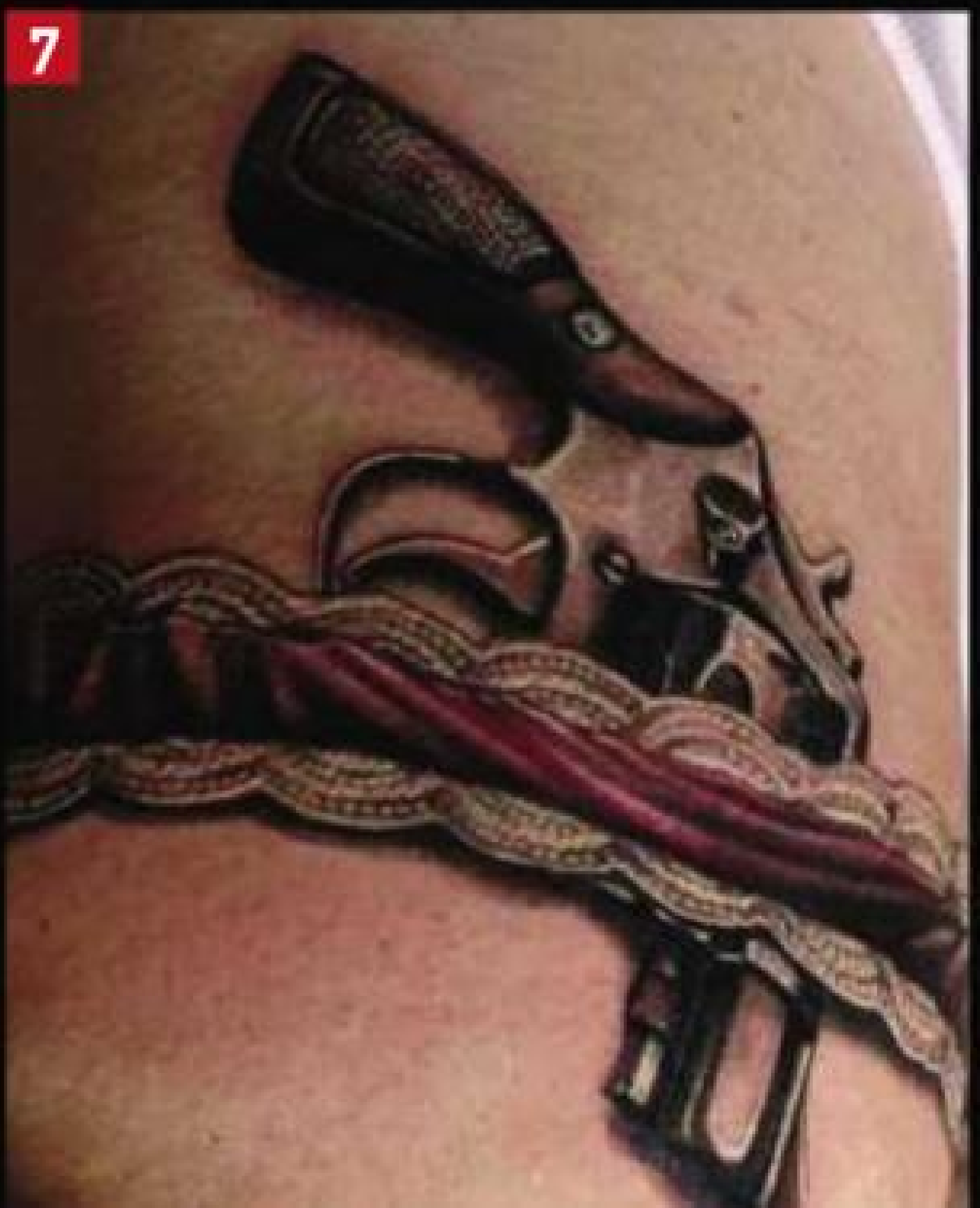


7

Ink of the underworld

Step into the darkest crags of Paul's mind on a tour of his favourite tatts

1 ALIENS

"I've been an HR Giger fan since I was a kid. The Swiss Surrealist artist is dark and visionary, and he really inspired me. This piece is my tribute to him."

2 MORPH

"This is an experiment in using the muscles of the body as an integral part of tattooing. To merge art with the canvas it's painted on – in this case the body – the design must fit as though it was meant to be there. It must follow and accentuate every shape and curve."

3 VORTEX

"This is a freehand piece that I enjoy because it tends to look as though the shape of the shoulder is warped, no matter which angle you look at it from."

4 THE SINS

"I'd been dying to ink my depiction of the Seven Deadly Sins for many years. The girl who I did this tattoo on let me explore the use of facial expressions, which is what made it such a challenge."

5 GOD IS WATCHING

"When I was a child, I was told the sun's rays were God looking down from the heavens. I always knew that I wasn't supposed to take that idea literally, but nonetheless, I thought it would be fun to depict sunlight as I saw it."

6 POPPIES

"This was a piece I did on a close friend. It represents a stage in her life when she'd got through her darkest hours. As the pain fell away, she blossomed."

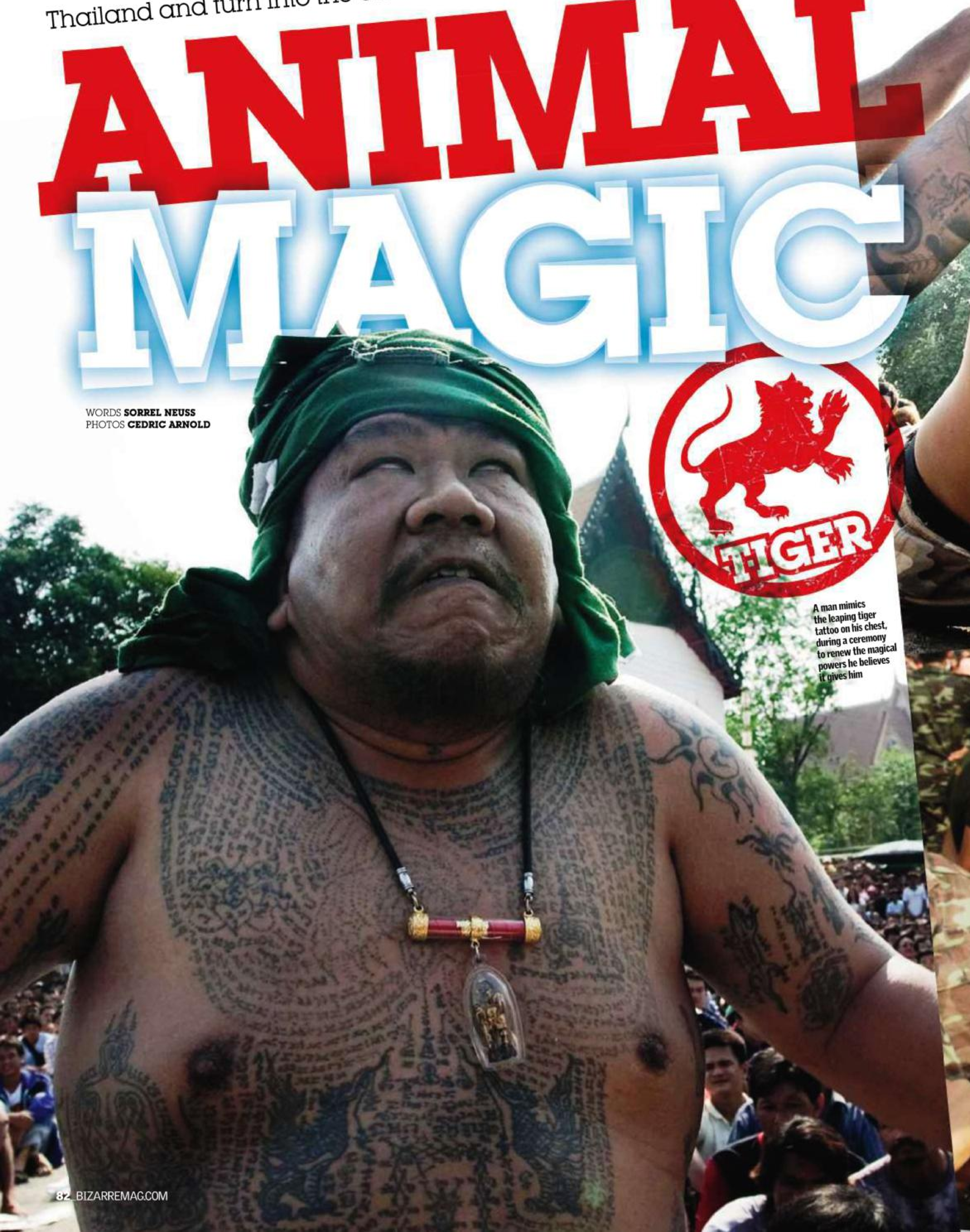
7 GARTER

"I know this tattoo isn't as evil as my usual work, but I'm quite happy with the gun. I always wanted to do a gun portrait for some strange reason."

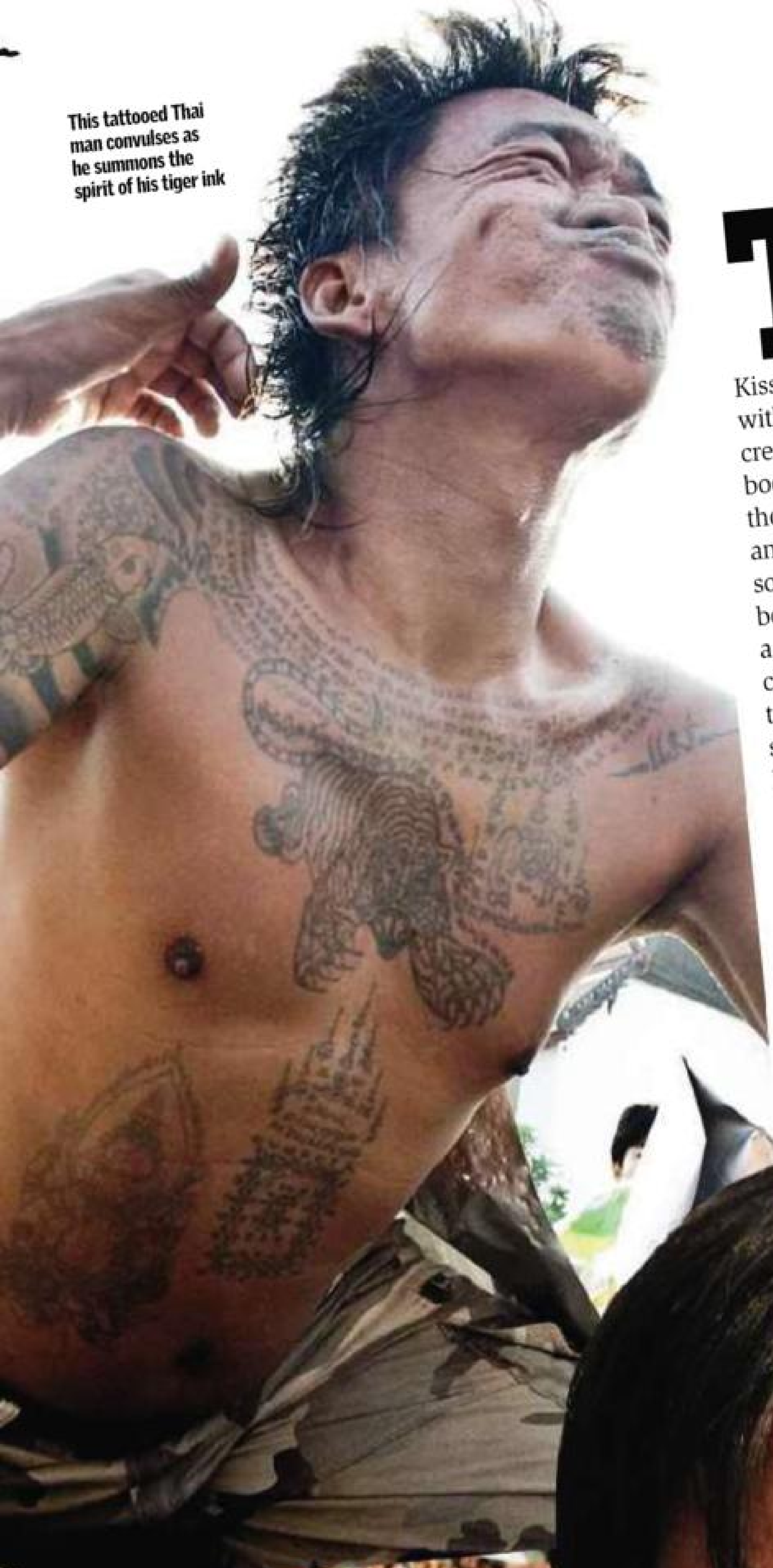
Once a year, a crowd of men congregate in a car park in Thailand and turn into the creatures inked on their skin, in a display of...

ANIMAL MAGIC

WORDS **SORREL NEUSS**
PHOTOS **CEDRIC ARNOLD**



A man mimics the leaping tiger tattoo on his chest, during a ceremony to renew the magical powers he believes it gives him



This tattooed Thai man convulses as he summons the spirit of his tiger ink

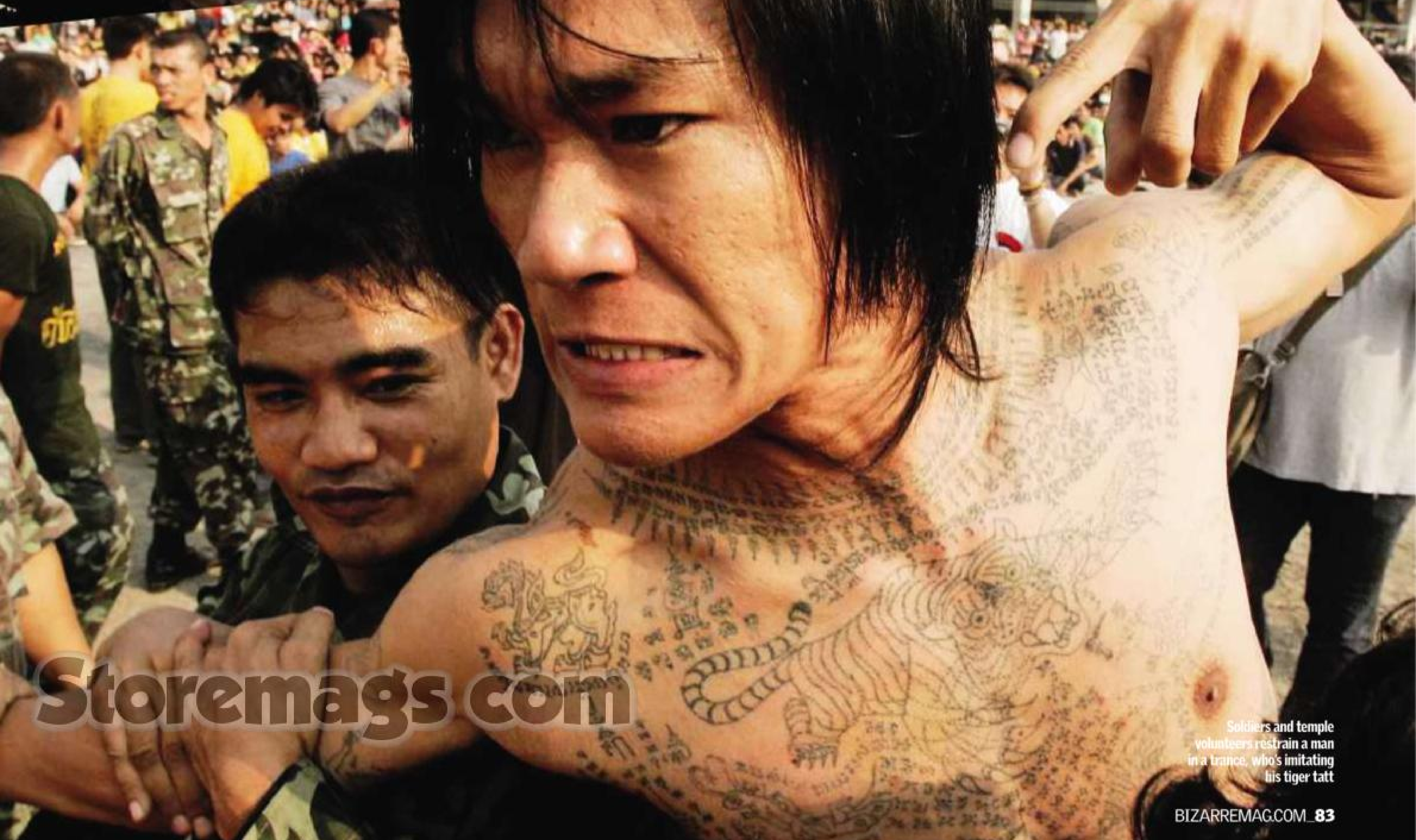
They stop bullets, they break daggers, and they make you more charming, wise, or kick-ass. At least, that's what Thai people think about their traditional tattoos, or *yantra*. Kissed with a monk's blessing and souped up with snake venom, *yantra* tattoos of mythical creatures from the *Ramayana* – a Hindu religious book – animals, and ancient religious texts, are thought to be magic, giving the wearer protection and supernatural abilities. No wonder they're sought after by trained killers, gangsters, soldiers, boxers and um, Angelina Jolie, who got one of a tiger on her back in 2004. Want to kung-fu chop faster than your opponent? Get a monkey tattoo. Looking for wisdom? Ink a tree-dwelling sage called a *ruusii* between your shoulders. Need to be more charming to woo someone you fancy? Try an ink lizard. But be warned, they come with strings attached...

The roots of these magical tatts run deep. Thai culture is a complex mix of Hinduism, Animism – the idea that spirits inhabit animals and objects – and Buddhism, elements of which are embedded in *yantra* ink. Buddhist monks began tattooing religious scriptures in Sanskrit 3,000 years ago to protect themselves from harm and bring luck, and a 15th century mural at a temple in Ayutthaya, southern Thailand, depicts epic battle scenes in which a sword has been thrust against a tattooed soldier's skin and shattered. The beliefs surrounding these tattoos have remained much the same for centuries. *Yantra*-inked people need to avoid certain decadent pleasures if they want to hold on to their tatt's power, such as letting a woman be on top during sex, having an affair, or, curiously, eating starfruit. The power the tatt bestows must be 'recharged' every year in mind-boggling ceremonies where inked men fall into trances, acting like the animal or character on their skin.

A roaring ritual

Every March, around 1,000 tattooed Thais descend on a car park outside Wat Bang Phra temple in Nakon Chaisi, a small town 50km west of Bangkok, for *wai khru*, a wild ceremony in which tattoos are re-blessed. This site is special because one of Thailand's most revered modern tattooist, Luan Phor Pern, was the temple's tattoo master until his death in 2002, aged 80, and a large statue of him sits on a stage during the ceremony along with 20-30 monks.

Things get going early and, by 7am, when the *yantra*-tattooed policemen, firemen, assassins, muay thai boxers and taxi drivers arrive, it's already scorching hot. Some people sit and eat breakfast, while others get stuck into the ritual. Fierce-looking men start shaking, concentrating on the significance of their tattoo, along with the importance of the moment. →



Soldiers and temple volunteers restrain a man in a trance, who's imitating his tiger tatt

Then, their eyes roll into the back of their head, and their chests begin to heave up and down as they suck in large lungfuls of air. In no time, they're grunting and twitching, possessed by the spirit on their skin. Some brave men run razor blades over their flesh or push daggers along their backs without drawing blood, to demonstrate the power of their special ink.

Those with many tattoos morph from one animal inked on their skin into another and *wai khru* is like Noah's ark in a hurricane. Photographer Cedric Arnold, who has lived in Thailand for seven years, and took the pictures on these pages, says that some of the men with tattoos of crocodiles or snakes are easy to avoid, as they're just squirming around on the ground. But his favourite is those with pig tatts. "They got their noses right into the dust and started snorting it up," he says. Cedric saw one man with a tiger tattoo – a design made popular 200 years ago by assassins who wanted fearless protection – begin to roar, claw up his hands and leap into the crowd. "It was terrifying," said Cedric. "Inexperienced spectators got mown down and two or three photographers who'd come to shoot the ceremony were crushed."

Muscled volunteers form a human barrier near the stage so that the monks don't get dragged into the frenzy, but their most crucial role is to bring the animals back down to earth. To release the *yantra*-tattooed men from their trance, the volunteers have to jump into the furore, rugby-tackle the leapers, squirmers and wrigglers, and twizzle their ears. And straight after getting a good lobe-rubbing, men who'd been frothing at the mouth and cutting themselves up on the deck stand up and calmly walk back to their seats. At 9.39am, the temple abbot makes a short speech. Then, using hosepipes decorated with bamboo stalks, his acolytes power-bless the crowd by spraying everyone with holy water. By 11am, the show's over and the energised, but sore, crowd head home.

From monk to monkey

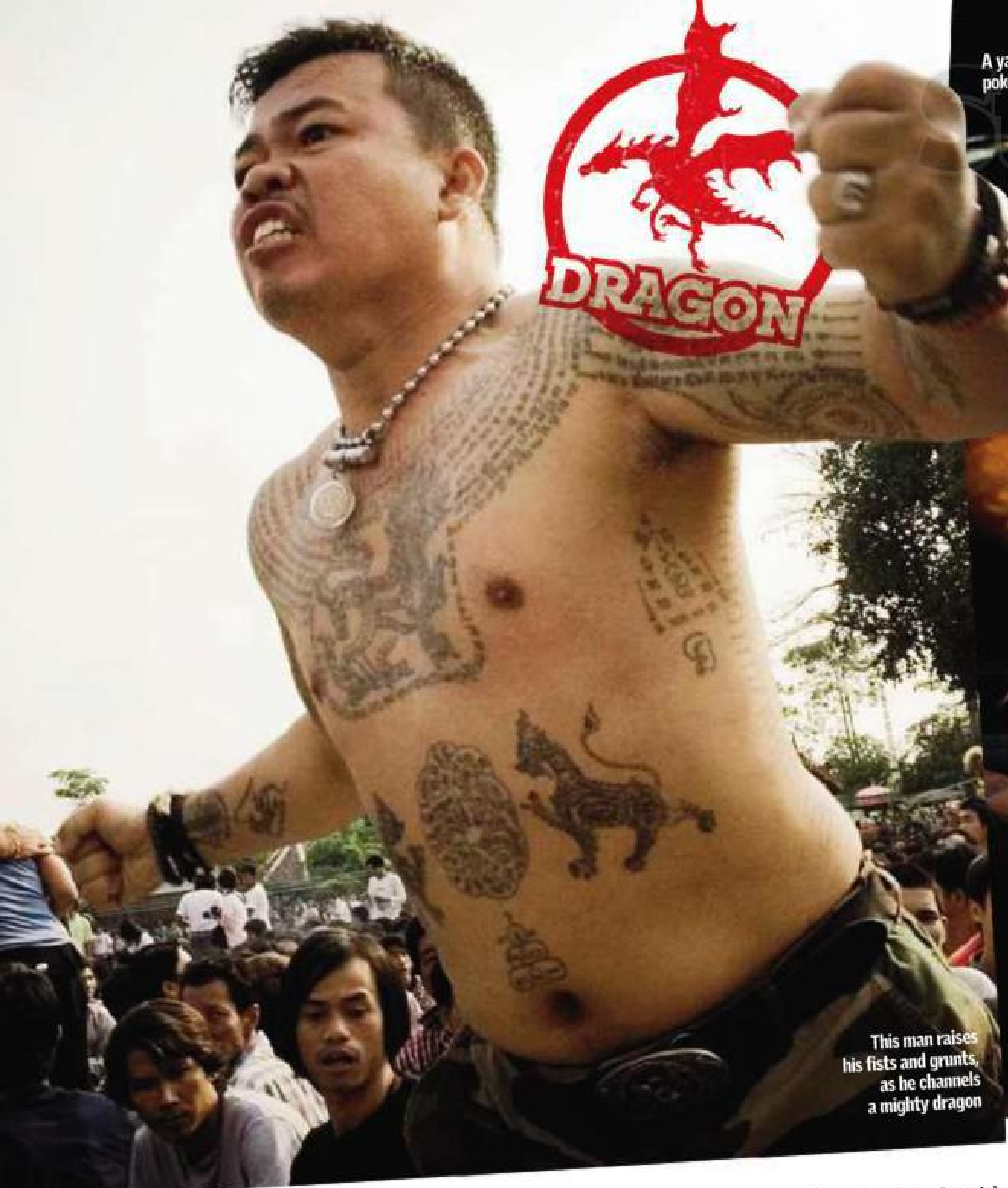
Getting *yantra* ink is an other-worldly experience that starts the minute you step into a tattooist's lair. The strength of a tatt's power depends on the reputation of the tattooist, or *ajarn*, who's also a spiritual leader and clairvoyant. Many *ajarns* are monks, but some are ordinary men who've been tutored in the art of tattooing by a trusted teacher and learned how to understand and write holy texts in Pali – a language spoken in India during the 8th century BC when Buddha was alive.

When Cedric went to see a local man being tattooed in Bangkok, he was bowled over by the *ajarn*'s performance. The deadlocked tattooist, who usually clips along in cowboy boots, listening to reggae in his pick-up truck, had slipped into a cotton robe for work. He lived in the forest for nine years to learn his skills, and to get into the right 'mystical zone' for tattooing and fortune-telling, he turns himself into a tree-dwelling wise man, or *ruusii*. Setting his transformation in motion, the *ajarn* puts on a black mask that he can barely see through, and slips into a trance by chanting a mantra in Pali. Murmuring in soft tones, he gradually speaks faster and louder until he's burbling a piercing staccato rhythm. "It's intense," says Cedric. "The *ajarn* sounds like a gibbering cartoon character and, when he's at the peak of his mantra, he stops, sits silently, then starts retching like he's going to puke. Next, he chews beetle nuts, which make his mouth turn red, spits a few times, and then his voice turns gravelly, like an old man's."

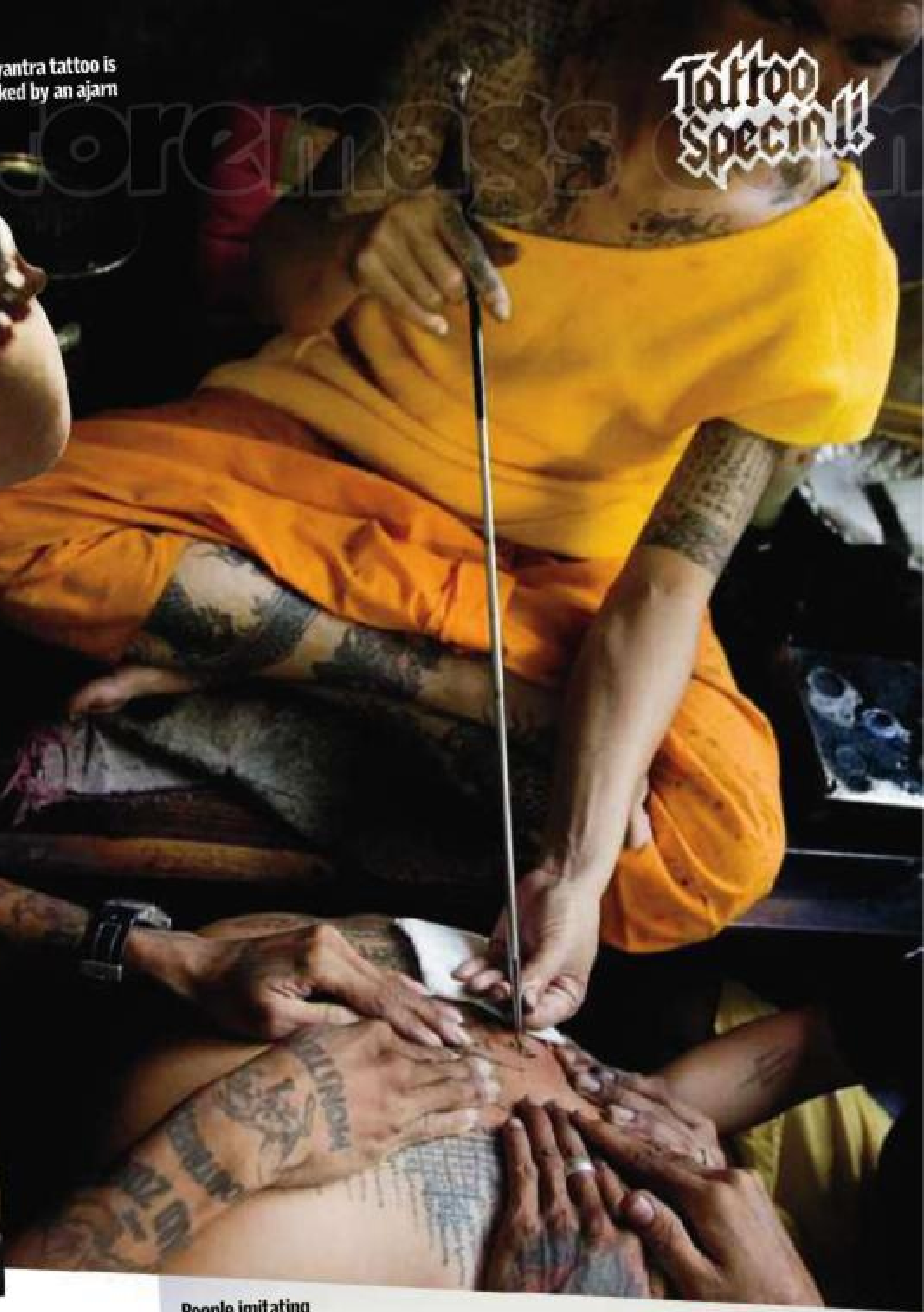
"The roaring tiger was terrifying. Spectators got mown down and photographers got crushed"

Stormags.com

Above: A strong volunteer rubs a man's ear, to try and bring him out of his animal trance
Right: A festival-goer jumps like the Hindu monkey god, Hanuman



This man raises his fists and grunts, as he channels a mighty dragon



A yantra tattoo is poked by an ajarn

People imitating crocodiles slither on their stomachs

Completing his transformation into a sage geriatric, the *ajarn* hunches over and looks up at the people who've come to see him. "Hello wise man, welcome," they say, setting down offerings of flowers, candles and cigarettes to the statues of deities on an altar, and passing envelopes with cash inside to the tattoo master. Grunting back at them, the *ajarn* is now ready to offer advice and ink. "The level of superstition in Thailand is amazing," says Cedric. "People had come to ask the *ajarn* what day they should open their shop, what colour of car they should buy, and in which direction they should turn out of the garage immediately after getting their ink. He even handed out a piece of cloth with a spell written on it for a man who wanted his girlfriend back – all as a *ruusii*."

The *ajarn*'s also possessed by the character when he tattoos. Dipping a bamboo fountain pen with a needle on the end into a mysterious cocktail of Chinese ink, snake venom, fag ash, herbs and a substance called 'corpse oil', he begins to jab at the shoulder of a man who's come for a tatt. Inking freehand, with a skilled, rapid, striking action, he forms the image of *stupas* – mound-like relics with spiky tops that contain the remains of high Buddhist lamas – by plunging the needle in little dots across the man's skin for 15 minutes. After soaking up the blood and excess ink with a tissue, he speaks another mantra, bestowing the *yantra* with its magic, and his watery-eyed customer steps up to leave. But even though his tattoo is designed to bring him luck and protect him from harm, he'll need to recharge it at Wat Bang Phra temple within a year.

The ajarn (right) isn't only a tattooist, he's also a fortune-teller

Tattoo temperaments

The *wai khru* festival is considered the best time to get a tattoo, and on the sidelines, in outbuildings within the temple complex, *ajarns* apply fresh ink. But a good *ajarn* will never let someone get a tattoo they can't handle, and women are considered too weak for the might of a *yantra* tatt. Girls with ink are frowned upon – although some get lizards in discreet places which are meant to make them more charming – so a few who feel strong enough opt for an invisible tattoo. The process is the same as that of a normal tattoo, but the *ajarn* uses oil instead of ink, and while the skin is red and sore immediately after it's been done, within a couple of months you have to strain to see the tiny dots of scarring where the needle went in.

But there are some men who can't take *yantra* ink. When Cedric saw a Canadian tourist trying to get a tatt of a centipede on his back, the *ajarn* tasked with the job sized up his customer and said, "I can see that you're a hot-head. The centipede is a sign born from fire, so you need to get a creature born from water to calm your temperament. You couldn't handle the power of a centipede." Could you? ■

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YOUR INK STINKS!

There's nothing funnier than bad ink – and they don't get worse than the rubbish posted on Ugliest Tattoos. Here's *Bizarre*'s pick of the worst…

Girls!

WORDS **DAVID MCCOMB**
PICTURES **UGLIESTTATTOOS.COM**

As well as heated arguments over who'll make the tea, and mercilessly teasing our picture editor, a day in the life of the *Bizarre* office is punctuated by someone sharing a link to the latest post on Ugliesttattoos.com, a site devoted to the crappiest ink in the world.

Part of the Cheezburger online empire – a network of over 50 humour sites that's become a one-stop shop for free LOLs – Ugliest Tattoos features user-submitted photos of the worst ink imaginable, including hideous portraits of pig-ugly children, hilariously misspelled text, and penises. Lots of penises.

Jessica Benner has been choosing the images and writing the jokes for Ugliest Tattoos since May 2009, and has been "dead on the inside since about mid-June 2009". We quizzed her about working on the world's funniest tattoo site, and over the next three pages you can see a handful of our favourites.

Jessica spends her days looking at the lamest ink around

Where did the idea for Ugliest Tattoos come from?

I live in San Francisco which, by my own unscientific calculation, must have the highest concentration of tattooed people in the world. Here, if you go into a downtown bank and get helped by a teller with facial tattoos, the weird part of that story would be that you went to a bank instead of just getting cash-back at the grocery store like everyone else.

So, being surrounded by all these tattoos, I feel like I've witnessed a shift in tattoo culture, from taking it seriously to getting one done without thinking about it properly. And that's not necessarily a bad thing – I think that tattoos are beautiful and I have no problem if someone wants to get one that's purely decorative or ephemeral. But it has given rise to a class of ill-conceived body art that makes up a good part of the site: energy drink logos, internet phenomena, and lots of cartoon characters having sex with each other. Generally, things that probably wouldn't have seemed so funny if you'd waited until the next morning when the pot smoke cleared.

What do you think appeals most to people about pictures of terrible tatts?

I think it's for the same reason why I can't stop reading news about Lindsay →

Unicorns!

Padres
GaslampBall

Lohan – people love a good train wreck. And these train wrecks are willful victims, which is also kind of like Lindsay Lohan.

Do tattooists ever get angry that their work is featured on your site?

I haven't heard from any irate tattoo artists so far. I do, however, sleep with one eye open. I might get eyes tattooed on to my eyelids so I can stop doing that.

Do you ever get annoyed with emails from people whose tatts are on the site?

I've received some angry emails from people who found out they were on the site. One woman had a really bad portrait of Robert '*Twilight*' Pattinson on her back – his face was completely lopsided and he looked like he had a mullet. She insisted that it was just a bad picture. I think she's lucky that she can't see her back.

But I've also heard from people who were happy to be featured. People with the funniest tattoos tend to have the best sense of humour about it, and understand that making it on to the site doesn't necessarily mean that I dislike or disapprove of their tattoos. I posted a picture of some *Pac-Man* knuckle tattoos that I thought were funny, and the guy was totally cool with it. "Stoked," even, as he put it.

The site is called Ugliest Tattoos, but I try to feature a mix of things to keep it interesting. To me, the worst tattoos are the clichéd butterfly tramp stamps and tribal armbands, but no-one wants to come to a website to look at those every day. It'd be boring. A lot of the ones I put up are actually beautifully executed – just really funny or strange.

"The strangest trend I've noticed is penis tattoos"

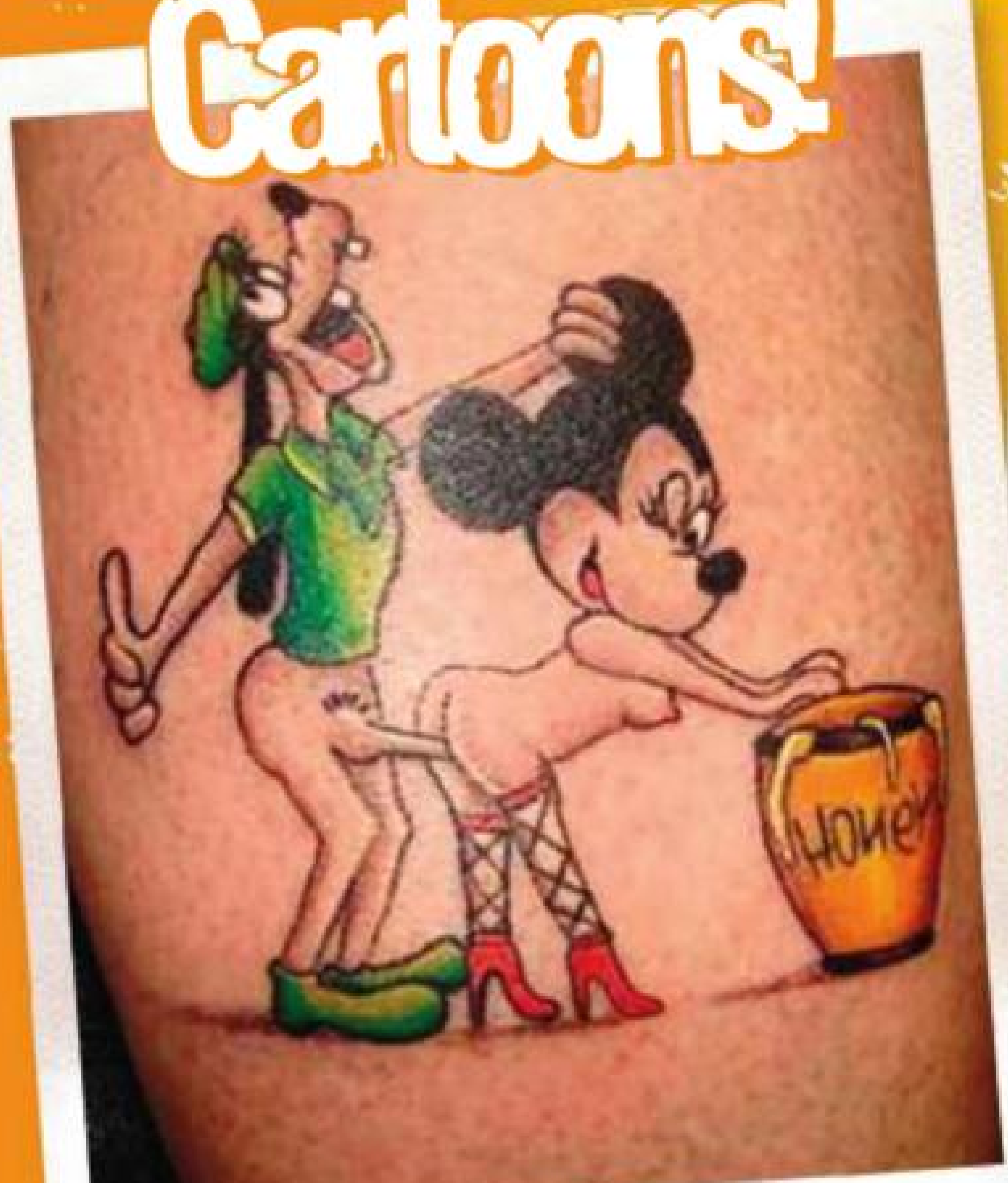
Has anyone contacted you to say that they've copied one of the bad tattoos, or tried to get a tattooist's contact details?

Just for fun, I posted a picture of a beautiful Calvin And Hobbes tattoo – I felt like we needed a break from the ugly. Everyone wanted to know who did it – the colours and the detail were something else. But so far no one's asked after any of the really bad artists. Except to suggest that some people shouldn't be allowed anywhere near a tattoo needle. It's just too bad that there isn't one of those art school tests for getting a tattooing license. You should have to be able to draw Homer Simpson and a pirate before you're allowed to scar people for life.

Have you spotted any new trends in bad tattoos?

The strangest trend is penis tattoos. Not tattooing one's penis, but tattoos elsewhere that depict →

Cartoons!



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Animals!

Like People
but
Under the Water

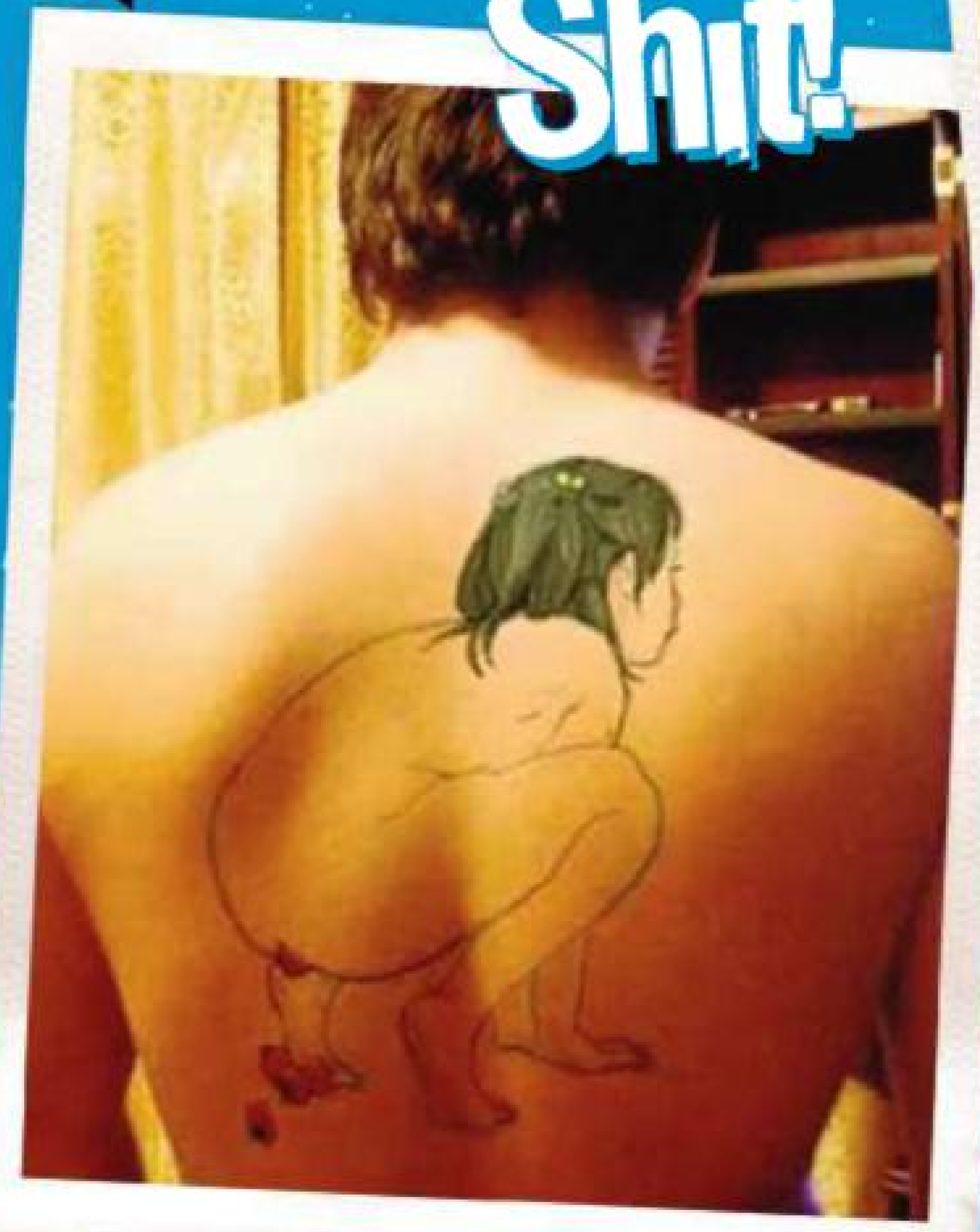
Portraits!

DADDYS LIL
GIRL

Filth!

hit it like
a champ

Shit!



2 GIRLS 1 CUP

a penis. There are at least 50 of them on the site, including unicorns with penises instead of horns.

But I might have a skewed perspective since I'm steeped in submissions to a website dedicated to weird tattoos. There are probably still more tribal armbands than tattoos of flying penises in this world. At least I hope there are. If you hear anything to the contrary, please never tell me.

Which country has the worst tattoos?

That's hard for me to say, since most of our submissions come from the USA. But I think the States is hard to beat. Where else would you find someone with a tattoo of the Statue Of Liberty holding a machine gun or a Walmart tramp stamp? If you know of anyone from your side of the pond with a tattoo of the Queen driving a tank, please send me a picture.

Are there any tatts you haven't put online because they're too hideous?

My mum reads the site every day, so there are some that I just can't bring myself to post, knowing that she'll see them. Like the one of two penises making out with each other. I'm just kidding, I totally posted it. My mum loves penises.

What's the most shocking tattoo you've posted?

By far the worst was one of the Twin Towers burning, with 'It's Raining Men' written underneath. I'm almost annoyed at how shocked I was by that one, since that's obviously what the person was going for. You win, asshole! The rest of us can take our penis tattoos and go home now.

As for funny, I always love the ones with spelling mistakes. It's shocking how many errors are made, especially given the fact that there are at least *two* people present when someone is getting a tattoo. Some of them are so ironic: 'Beautiful Tradgedy', 'I'm Awsome', and 'Sweet Pee'. There's no excuse. I don't care if you're a working-class guy who didn't have the opportunity to get a good education. If you can afford a tattoo rig, you probably have the internet on your mobile phone – just look it up! Or call your mom and ask her to look it up for you. She'd love to hear from you! Kill two birds with one stone!

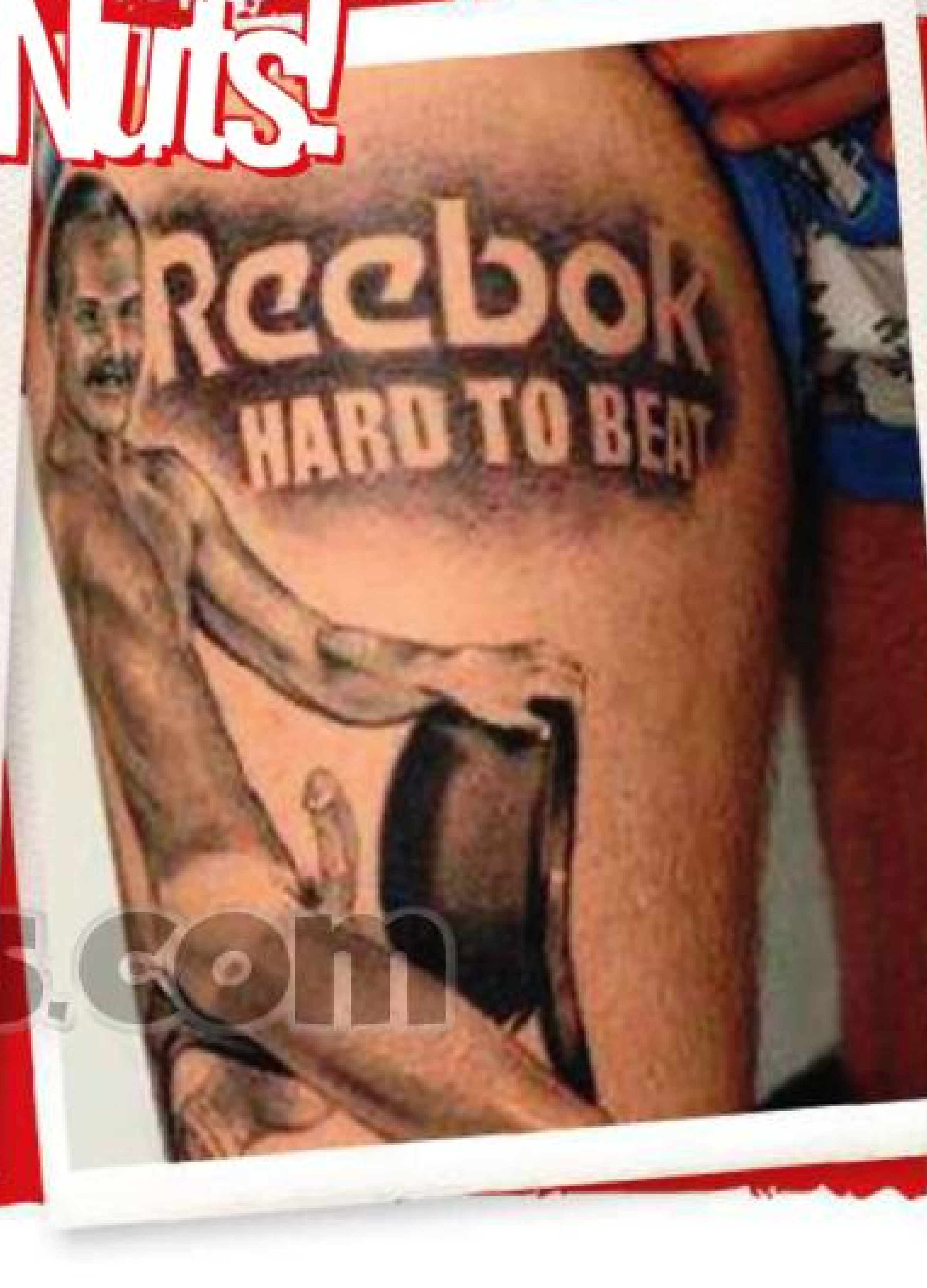
Have *you* got any bad ink?

I have one small and unassuming tattoo – a cherry blossom on my upper arm. To be honest, I'd never get anything too shocking because I'm terrified of doing anything that my mom would disapprove of. Like, I really hope that she doesn't read this interview and see the part where I said she loves penises. I'm just kidding, mom. I know you hate penises!

> "I love the ones with spelling mistakes, like 'sweet pee'"

Check out more stinkers at Ugliesttattoos.com

Just Plain Nuts!



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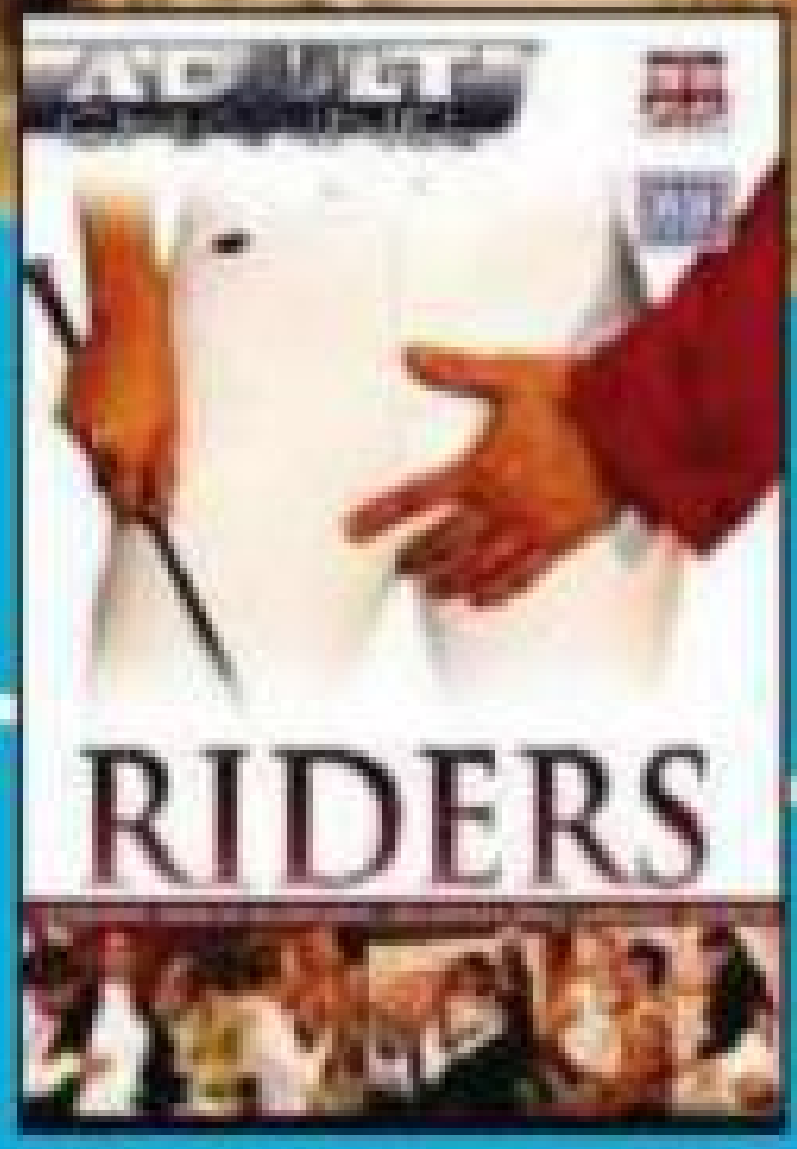

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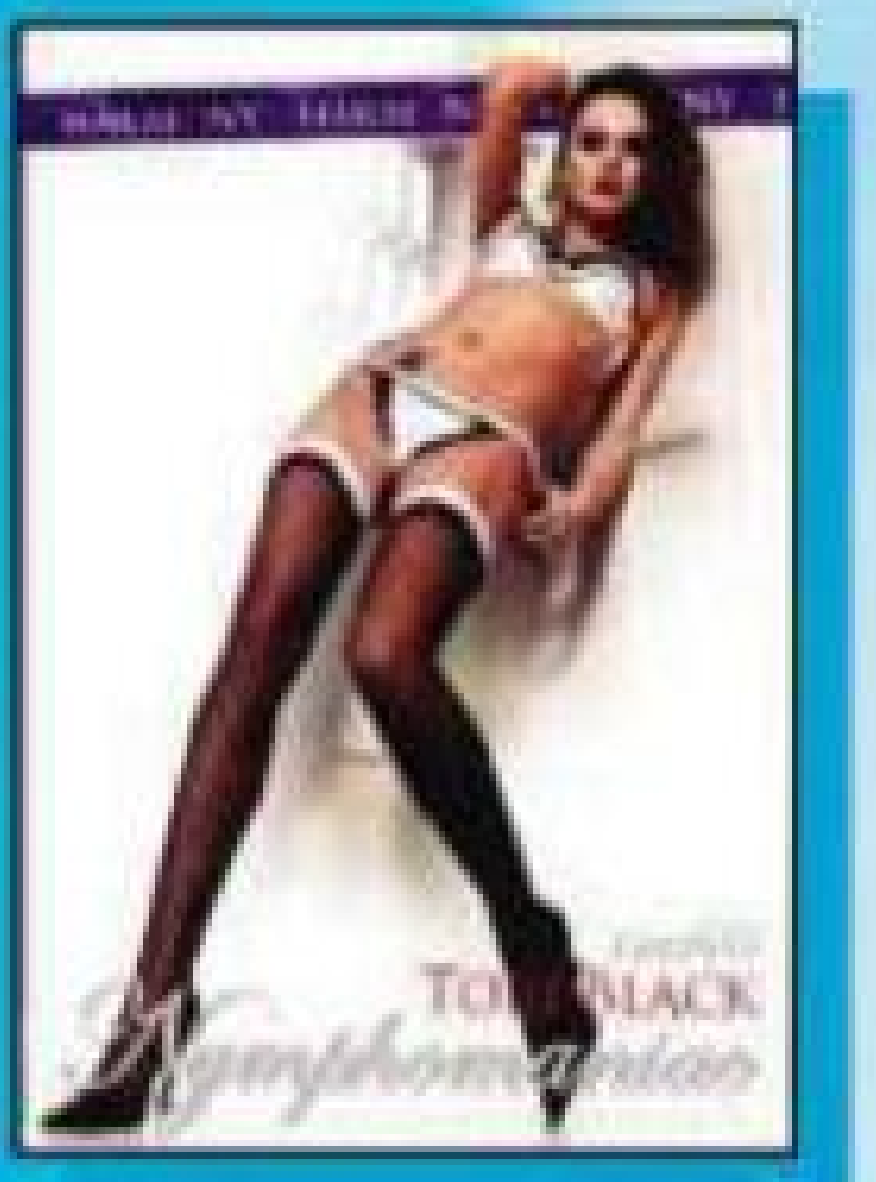

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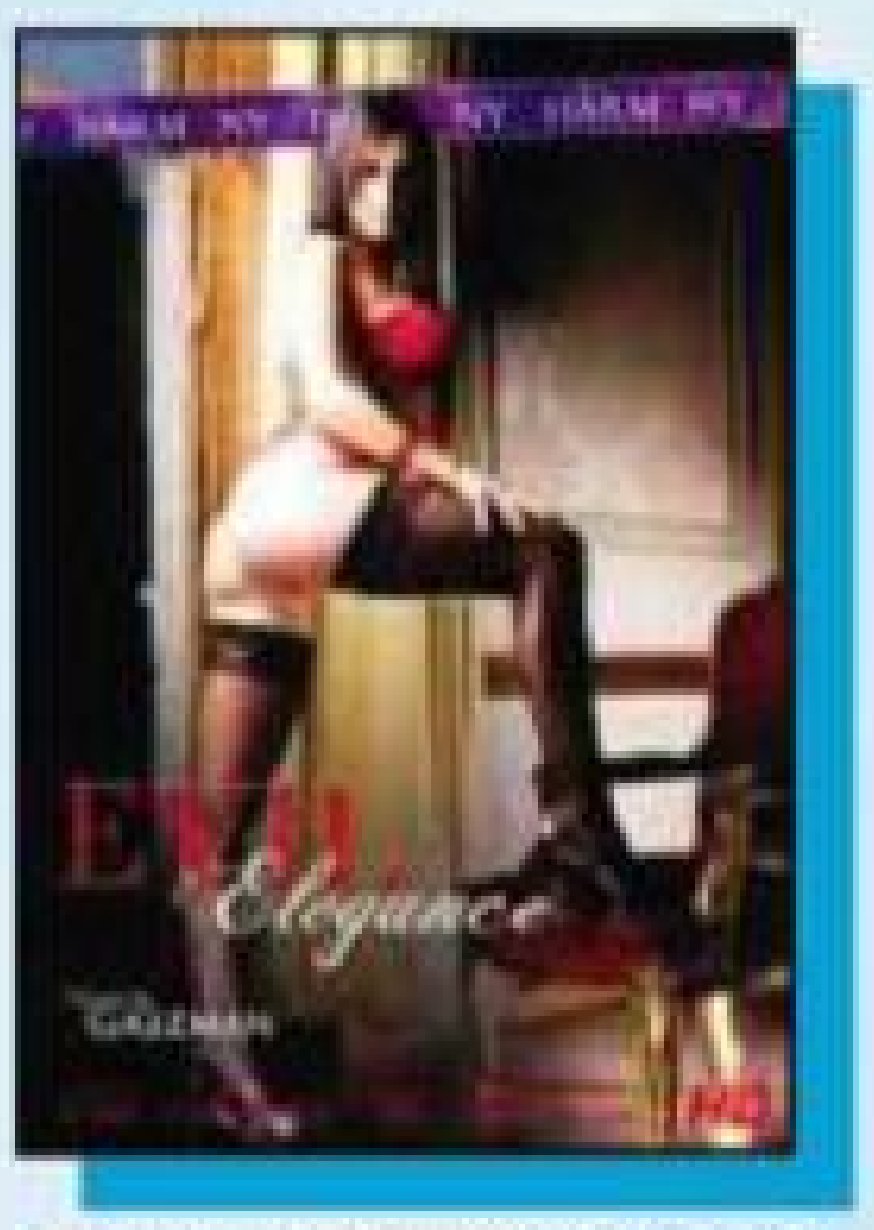

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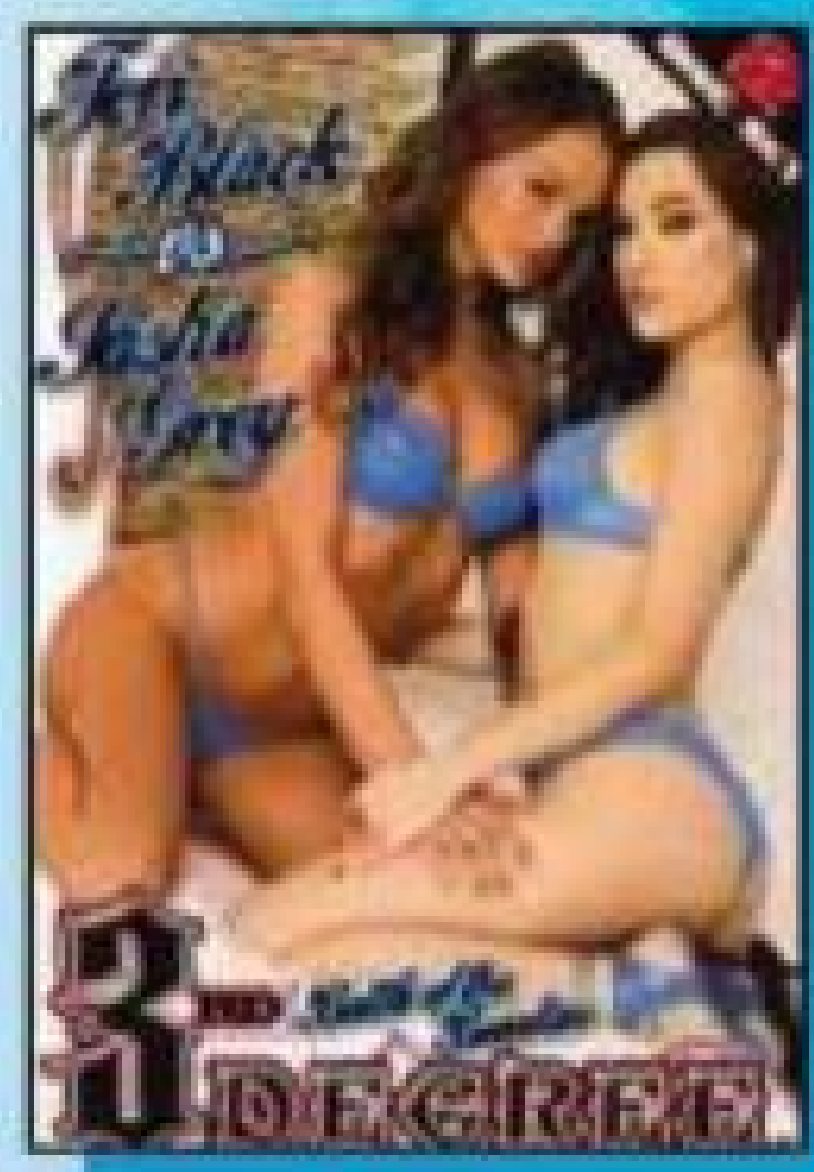

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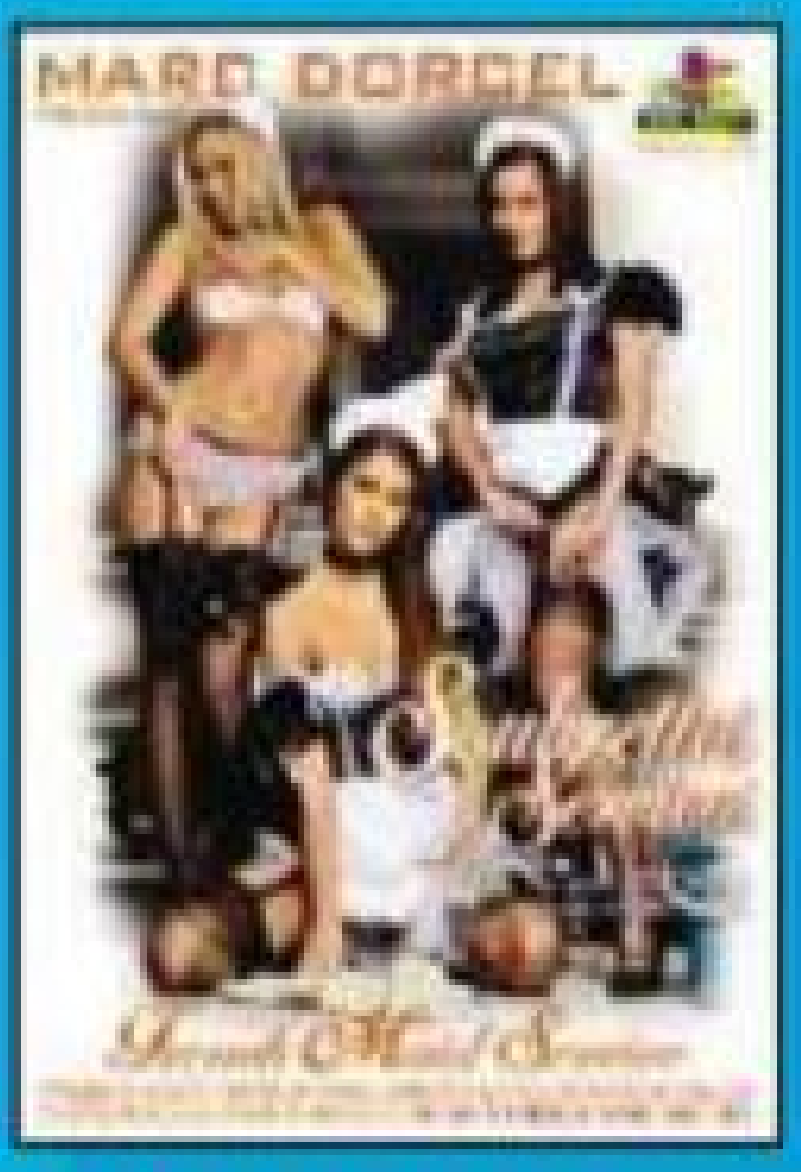

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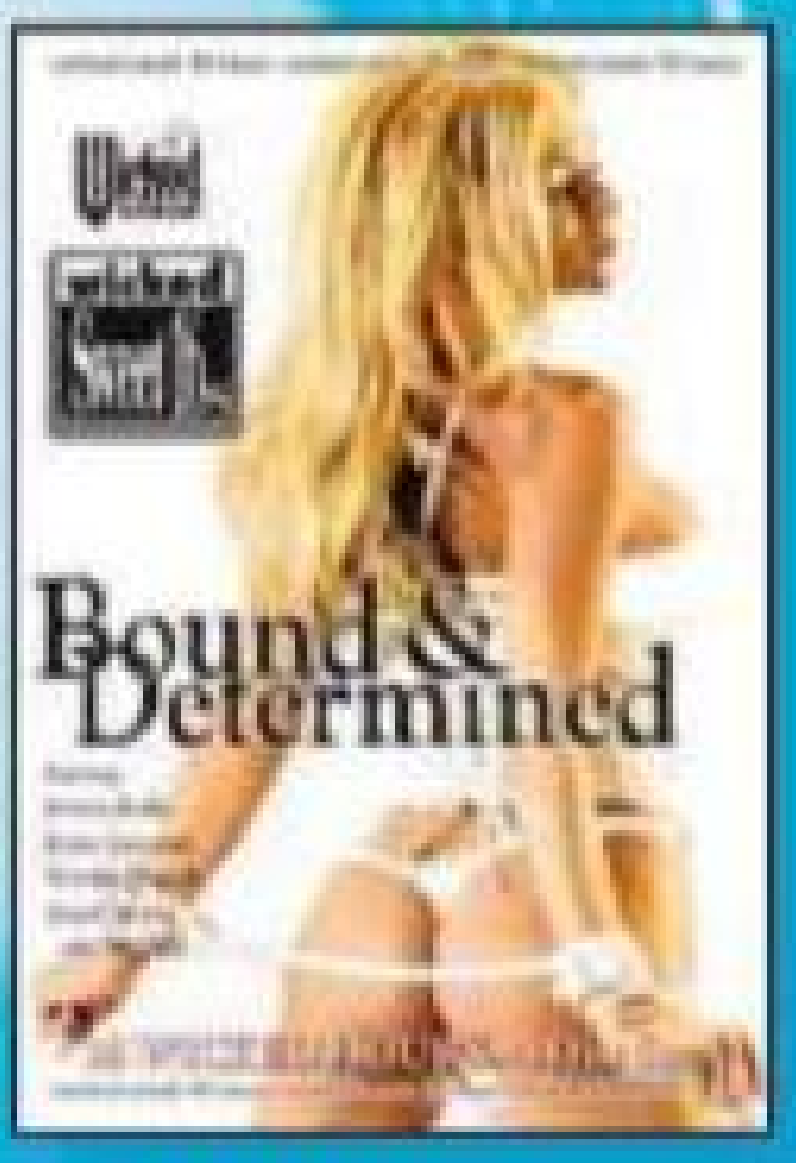

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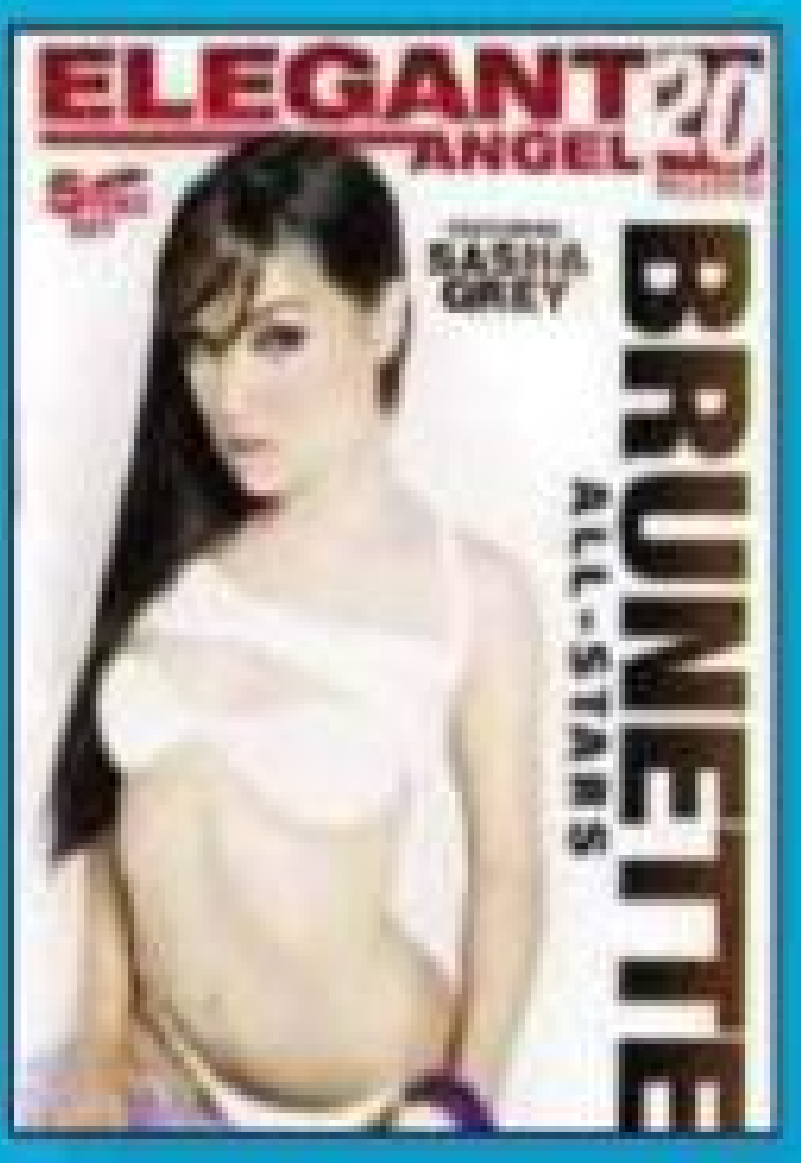

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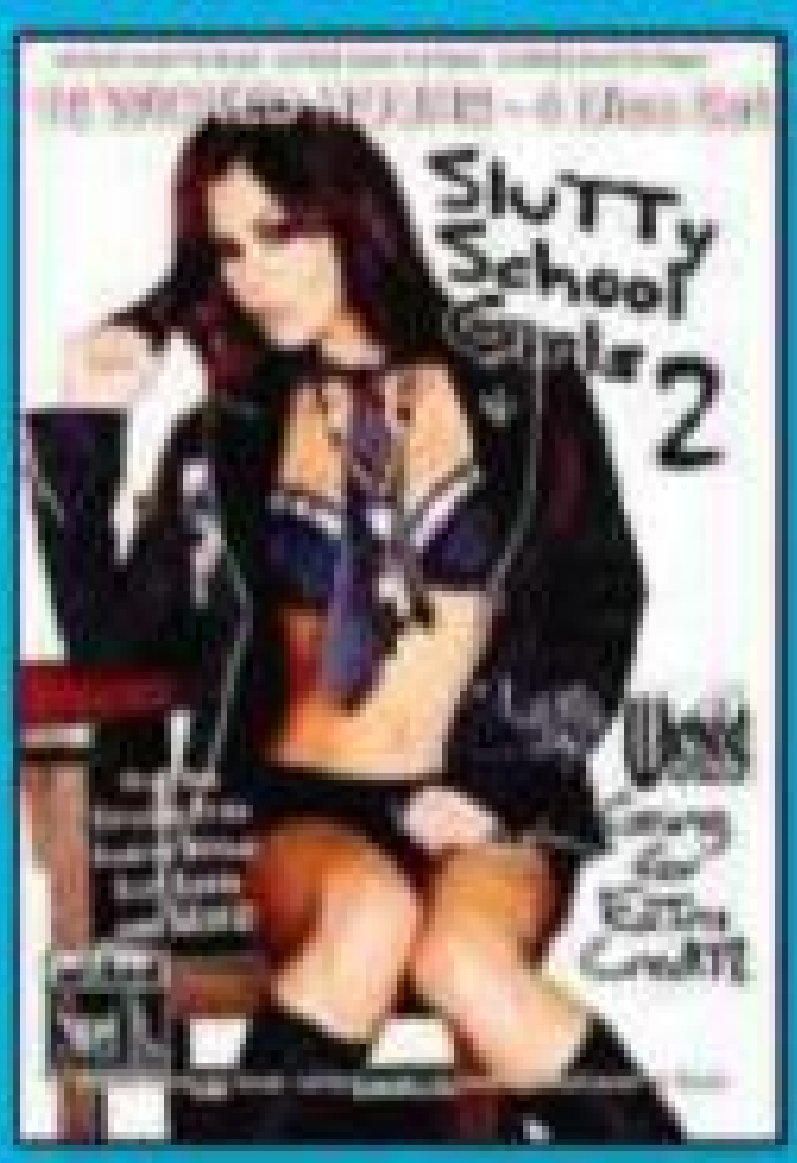

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PIONEER OF PERV

WORDS **JONNY TRUNK AND KATE HODGES**

Deviant designer John Sutcliffe dressed your granny and grandad in leather and rubber. And here's the photographic evidence!

The high-gloss latex couture designs and intricate leather costumes of today have their roots in the creations of John Sutcliffe, the grandaddy of fetish wear. A new book, *Dressing For Pleasure*, by archivist and cult esoterica fanatic, Jonny Trunk, documents Sutcliffe's journey from motorcycle wear fanatic to fetish gear guru.

In 1957, John Sutcliffe was in desperate straits. His marriage had broken down and he was going through a mental breakdown, and he'd left his home with little more than a suit, a tape recorder and a camera.

Sutcliffe tried to make a living by taking wedding photographs, and earned enough to buy himself a motorbike. One night, he took a woman for a ride in the rain. She got drenched, so they decided to buy some ladies' leather motorcycle gear. After a fruitless search Sutcliffe realised that he'd have to make it himself. "I went into Soho and I bought a dozen skins of red leather and asked my landlady if I could borrow her sewing machine," he said. The result was, "tucked into boots, with a wide belt and huge press studs, so chivalry and sexuality were happily combined."

Sutcliffe works his leathers

Sutcliffe had hit upon something that he was genuinely skilled at. He founded AtomAge, a 'manufacturer of weatherproofs for lady pillion riders', making outfits for female rally drivers before progressing to catsuit-style costumes in vinyl and leather.

During the 1960s, Sutcliffe found work in theatre and film, making costumes for the Valkyries in a production of Wagner's *Ring Cycle*, and space suits for sci-fi films such as Hammer's *Moon Zero Two*. Pop artist Allen Jones used AtomAge outfits to dress his 1969 female mannequins-as-home-furniture art piece, 'Chair, Table and Hat Stand', and it's been suggested that his fashion strongly influenced the costume designers who created Emma Peel's leather jumpsuit for *The Avengers*.

Next, Sutcliffe shifted into the rubber garment trade, for which he had to learn a new set of skills. The move was a success. The business expanded and Sutcliffe opened new headquarters in Soho, which brought customers from the sex trade as well as private collectors. Sutcliffe had two rules for his designs: never to make anything that'd cause pain, and never to attempt to make the impossible. →

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Storemags

Space love

Flamenco passions

"More tea, vicar?"

The standard romp with the secretary had started getting old

Go-go fetish rangers...

"My first suit tucked into boots with a wide belt and studs – chivalry and sexuality were happily combined"

In 1972, he started *AtomAge* magazine to showcase his work and reach like-minded rubber and leather fans. The magazine even had a social network in its *AtomAge Correspondence Section*, which allowed readers to contact each other.

During the 1970s, Sutcliffe's pervy reputation grew. Sadly, an artistically shot documentary on the company, *Dressing For Pleasure*, which also included footage of Vivienne Westwood and Malcolm McLaren's Sex boutique, was banned by London Weekend Television, denying Sutcliffe a wider audience. The film is now available on DVD.

By 1980 the previously pocket-sized *AtomAge* had become *AtomAge International* and relaunched in a larger, A4 format. Sutcliffe had also launched sister title *AtomAge Rubberist*. All seemed to be going swimmingly until Sutcliffe published the fictional title, *The Story Of Gerda*. An offended member of the public sent a copy of the book to the police who subsequently raided his offices and confiscated all of his stock. Sutcliffe was fined a hefty £1,000 and was forced to pulp every back copy of *AtomAge*.

2001 was an uneventful odyssey

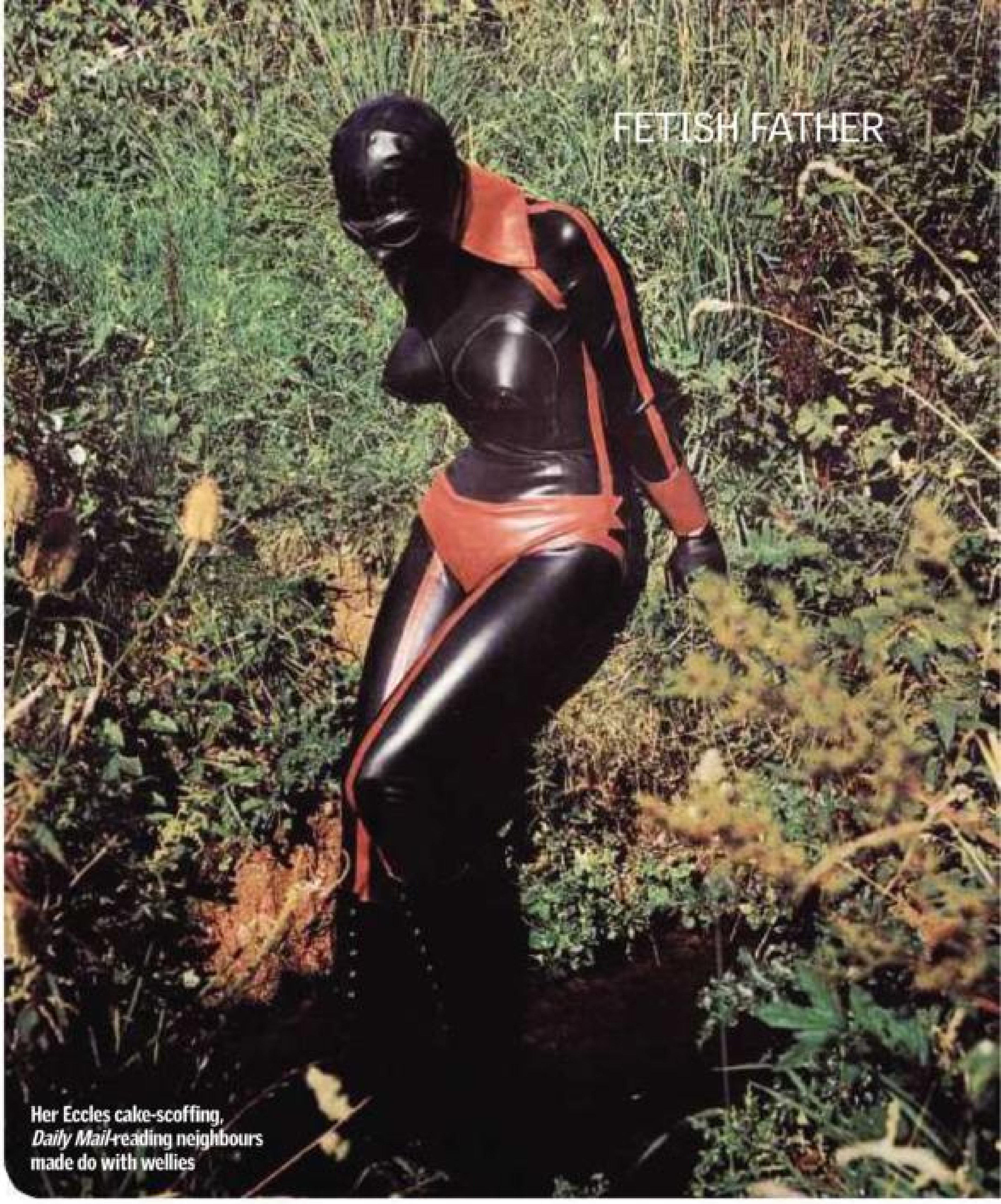
The business limped on, but it had been badly hurt by the prosecution. In 1987 Sutcliffe died at his desk, making the magazine he'd nurtured and loved.

His reputation may have been lost in the murky wilderness over the last couple of decades, but *Dressing For Pleasure* brings his work to a new generation of kinksters. Its collection of pictures from the magazine show innocent amateurs playing in rubber and leather costumes in their homes, as well as shots of professional models wearing the gear. It's endearing, informative, and very funny.

The new 'breathable' suit needed some refinement

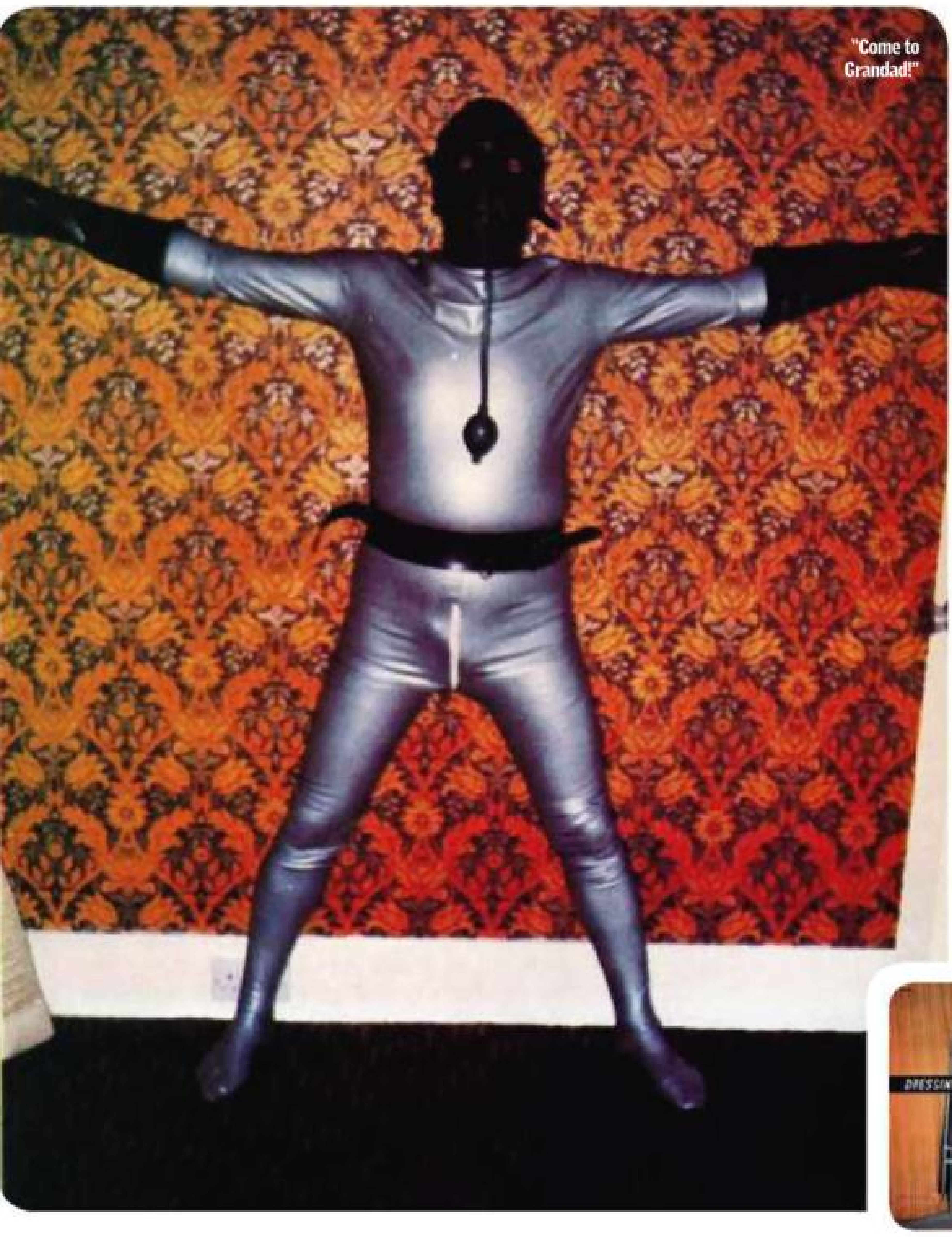
"Me Draculana, you Jane"

More randy birds than usual at Trafalgar Square

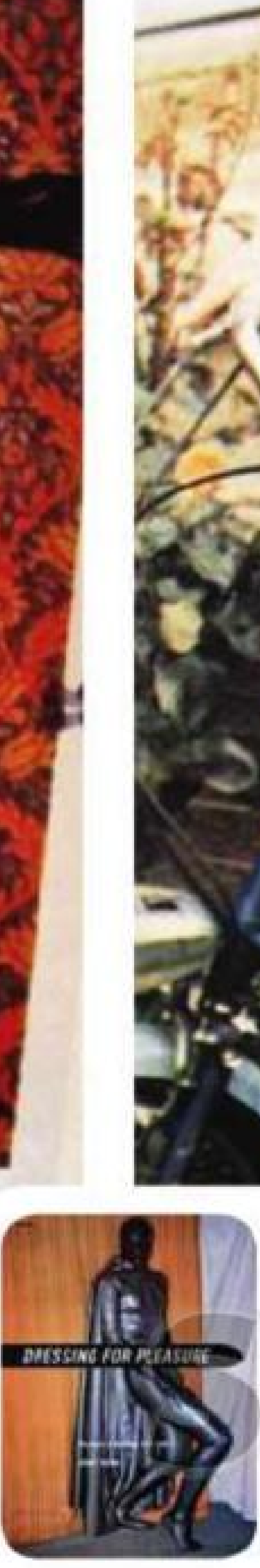


Her Eccles cake-scoffing, *Daily Mail*-reading neighbours made do with wellies

"Want anything from the shop?"



"Come to Grandad!"



Dressing For Pleasure by Jonny Trunk is published by Fuel, priced £16.95 Go to Fuel-design.com

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Zombie

Zombiemania has spread to your TV! Check out *The Walking Dead*:

WORDS **VICTORIA HOGG**

"They scare the *shit* out of me!" admits *The Walking Dead* star Sarah Wayne Callies, half-laughing but not joking about the zombies that infest this amazing new US show, "And I don't *like* being scared. I'd always pick a lunch table as far away from them as possible. It was an on-set joke that everyone but me thought was funny!" It's too bad for our leading lady: zombies is what you get with this gripping six-parter: lots of 'em.

Born as a comicbook in 2003, the adaptation of *The Walking Dead* has timed itself perfectly to ride the crest of 2010's global zombie-loving wave. The vibe's been building – think Will Smith's *I Am Legend*, Woody Harrelson's *Zombieland* and Jane Eyre spoof novel *Pride And Predjudice And Zombies* – but this year the gargling shuffle-monkeys are everywhere. Virgin Trains adverts warn us "Don't Go Zombie", Baltimore University offers a course in zombie studies and, in the games world, Rockstar Games' *Red Dead Redemption* has an 'Undead Nightmare' package, while Activision and Treyarch confirm that *Call Of Duty: Black Ops* will have a zombie mode. Yup, zombies are hotter than Hades right now, and this apocalyptic Atlanta-based tale will bring your telly to boiling point...

Dead good

The *New York Times* best-selling comicbook series, *The Walking Dead*, is written by Robert Kirkman (head of Image Comics' subdivison, Skybound), used to be drawn by Kentucky-based artist Tony Moore and is now illustrated by Brit Charlie Adlard, who won a 'Best Artist' Eisner nomination for his contribution. It's a razor-sharp story about humanity, survival and society in the absence of society – all tied up with a lip-smackingly gory zombie backdrop.

In the show, Kentucky deputy sheriff Rick Grimes (played by the UK's Andrew *This Life* and *Teachers* Lincoln, but known in the US for his role in Richard Curtis's *Love Actually)*, is a straight-up family man who gets shot in the line of duty. He wakes up in hospital a month later to find that the world as we know it has ended. Bewildered and desperate to find his wife, Lori – *Prison Break*'s Sarah Wayne Callies – and son Carl, Rick goes to Atlanta, Georgia, where he's heard that there's an official survivors' camp. But when he gets there, the undead roam the streets in terrifying numbers and help is nowhere. How will Rick survive?

Writer Kirkman, who's also an executive producer, is still adjusting to the switch from comicbook to TV phenomenon, broadcast in 120 countries and in 33 languages.

"It's nerve-racking being on set and knowing that all this came from your comicbook," says the cheery big man. "When comicbooks are made, they're, like, a guy in a room by himself, talking on the phone to a guy in a room by *him*self. So when you're here, on set, it's a little terrifying! There's about a thousand people working on this! They have walkie talkies!" He grins nervously. "It all seems pretty expensive, I'll tell you that!"

Braaains!

Kirkman's clearly the kid in the candy shop. The writer turned down tons of adaptation offers waiting for the right team – AMC, producers of sexy dramas *Mad Men* and *Breaking Bad* – to come along. The show oozes family feeling, from the head honchos: Robert himself, executive producer/writer/director Frank Darabont (*The Shawshank Redemption*) and executive producer Gale Anne Hurd (producer of *The Terminator*, *Aliens* and *The Abyss*), right down to the cast.

"We became close, had parties," says Sarah, "though not in costume! And every time a cast member got killed, I'd organise a dinner. We wanted to honour people's commitment: when they get whacked, you wanna raise a glass!"

And people certainly get whacked. In the show's first five minutes, a flash-forward, Rick Grimes sees a little blonde girl and calls out to her but when she turns, she's a zombie. She shuffles towards him clutching a teddy and... he shoots her square in the forehead. Heavy!

"It's a rugged start," agrees Sarah. "I was on set that day and spent quite a lot of time with that little girl, who was a real champion – out there in the heat for so long, unable to eat or drink because her mouth was wired open. I felt bad for her as a performer, though they took great care of her. But I don't think it's gratuitous: what it does is tell the audience *immediately*, that this world is awful, hideous, bloody and the stakes are incredibly high."

The show taps into a mood Darabont calls 'millennial dread', brought on by our →

Nation

a thrilling, chilling, infected blood-spilling new US series...

anxiety over issues such as climate change or oil shortages. As he told the *LA Times* last month, "There's a sense of doom settling into our species because clearly, what we have built here is not sustainable as a civilization, and we're all starting to get the idea that the fish tank has been poisoned."

Though the tale's human elements are presented brilliantly, Darabont confesses that what he really wanted was to get his teeth into the zombies. "That's all I've wanted to do since I was 14 years old and saw George Romero's original *Night of the Living Dead*," he says. "We're definitely taking the page from George Romero's mythos."

Staggering success

The hype has bitten quicker than a zombie in a Walmart, thanks to behind-the-scenes footage and a wildly successful San Diego Comic-Con conference back in July. Sarah (whose fans fell for her so hard in her role as *Prison Break*'s Dr Sara Tancredi that her death in season 3 inspired a successful 'Save Sara Tancredi' backlash campaign) says meeting *The Walking Dead* fans was intense.

"San Diego Comic-Con was amazing – like going to a costume party with 7,000 of your closest friends you've never met," she says. "They were lovely, very supportive."

And they really care. One devotee, filmmaker Daniel Kanemoto, proved how much: he animated an opening credit sequence using Robert Kirkman's original artwork and an eels track called 'Fresh Blood': *After the fires, before the flood / My sweet baby, I need fresh blood*. He posted it on his website, Exmortisfilms.com, and it went viral. CNN covered the story, and *Lost* executive producer Damon Lindelof posted on Daniel's site, "We are arriving at that unique moment where the term 'fan-made' becomes moot – this is extraordinary," and even Gale Anne Hurd herself wrote, "Kudos to Daniel Kanemoto for his terrific fan version of *The Walking Dead* opening titles – they rock big time!"

Jon Bernthal plays Rick Grimes' police partner, Shane Walsh

But real-life zombies can be hard to control, so the crew invented a scheme: zombie school. Special FX wizard Greg Nicotero (who's worked on the horror make-up of every classic gory film from George Romero's original *Day Of The Dead* to *Hostel* and *The Hills Have Eyes*), auditioned his extras by making them negotiate an obstacle course, accelerate on hearing a noise, and get up out of a chair... all in character. "I've worked with loads of zombies but I've never run a zombie school!" he laughs. "You can do great

"The opening scene tells you this world is awful, hideous, bloody, and the stakes are incredibly high"

Casting was key for the zombie nicknamed 'Bicycle Girl': The long-faced actress, whose make-up took three hours, was picked by Frank Darabont

GOD
FORGIVE
US

Rick discovers the corpses of a Christian family who have committed suicide rather than live with the zombies

COMIC COURTESY IMAGECOMICS.COM

make-up on someone but when you get the actor on set, it becomes about their performance. It was great for me to be able to hand-pick people in terms of look *and* performance." The result is horribly convincing, with every undead sighting and attack in the show a spine-chilling moment.

The 'live' cast – including male leads Andrew Lincoln and Jon *The Class* Bernthal – are also top-notch. "I can't speak highly enough of Andy and Jon," says Sarah. "They're *incredible* performers, but they're also such kind, patient, generous men they make everyone work harder. Having that with one leading man is a blessing; having it with two is a statistical improbability!"

DO NOT
ENTER

The Saint Patrick's Day Parade just got ugly

Importantly, the show doesn't follow exactly the original story. "That'd bore the living daylights out of the fans," says Sarah, "They've read the comicbook, they know what happens. Our job is to find the essence and hit some major points but to bring new stories, characters and perspectives, so that scene to scene, they won't know what's coming next. We got together on the weekends to work on our stuff, on our own time, because we care. With a show like this, you've got a bazillion fans who've been reading the comicbook forever. You *don't* want to fuck it up." ●

The Walking Dead airs on 5 November on FX at 10pm

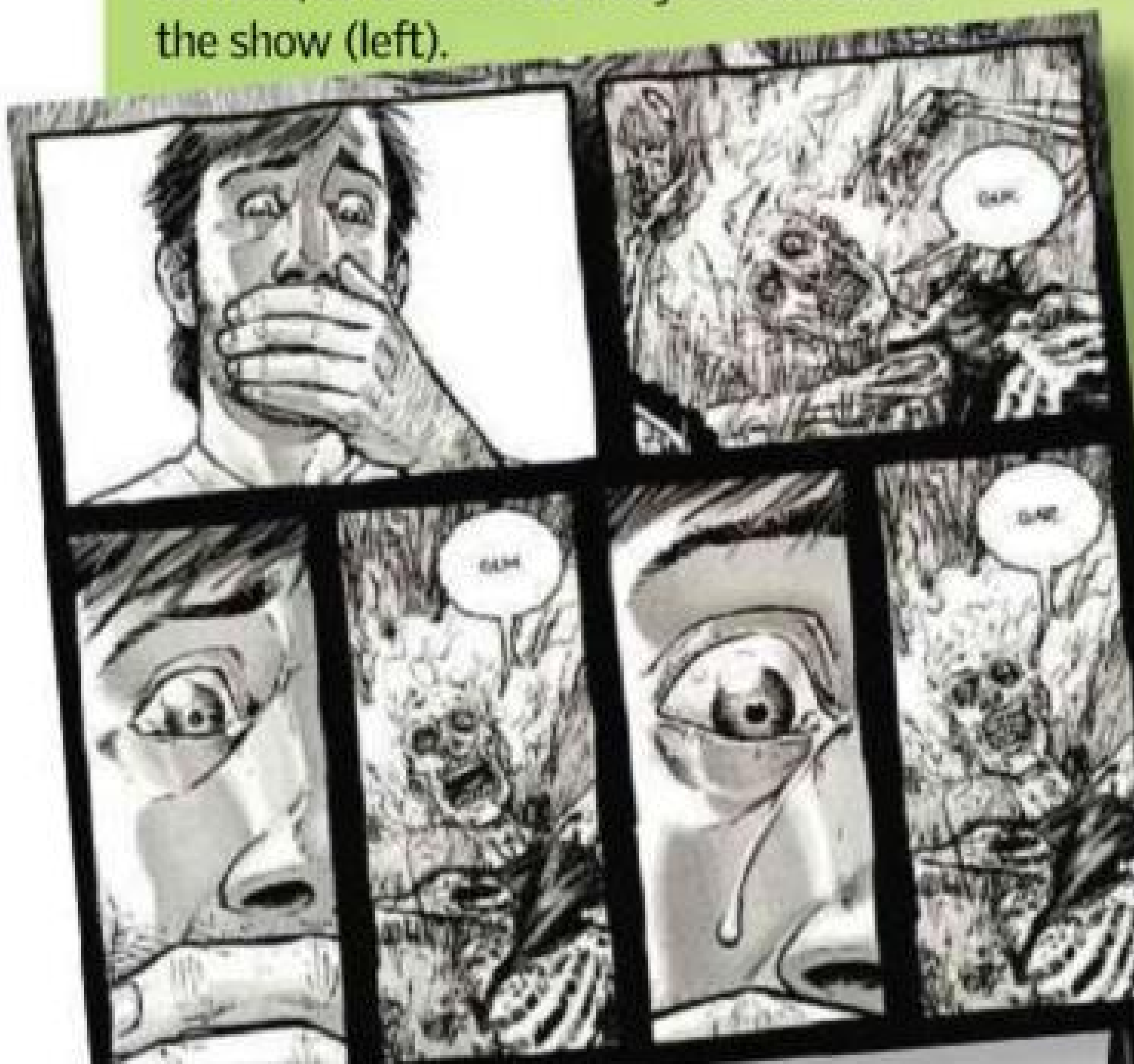
For more on the show go to Amctv.com

STILL WALKING

Panels from *Volume 1: Days Gone Bye*

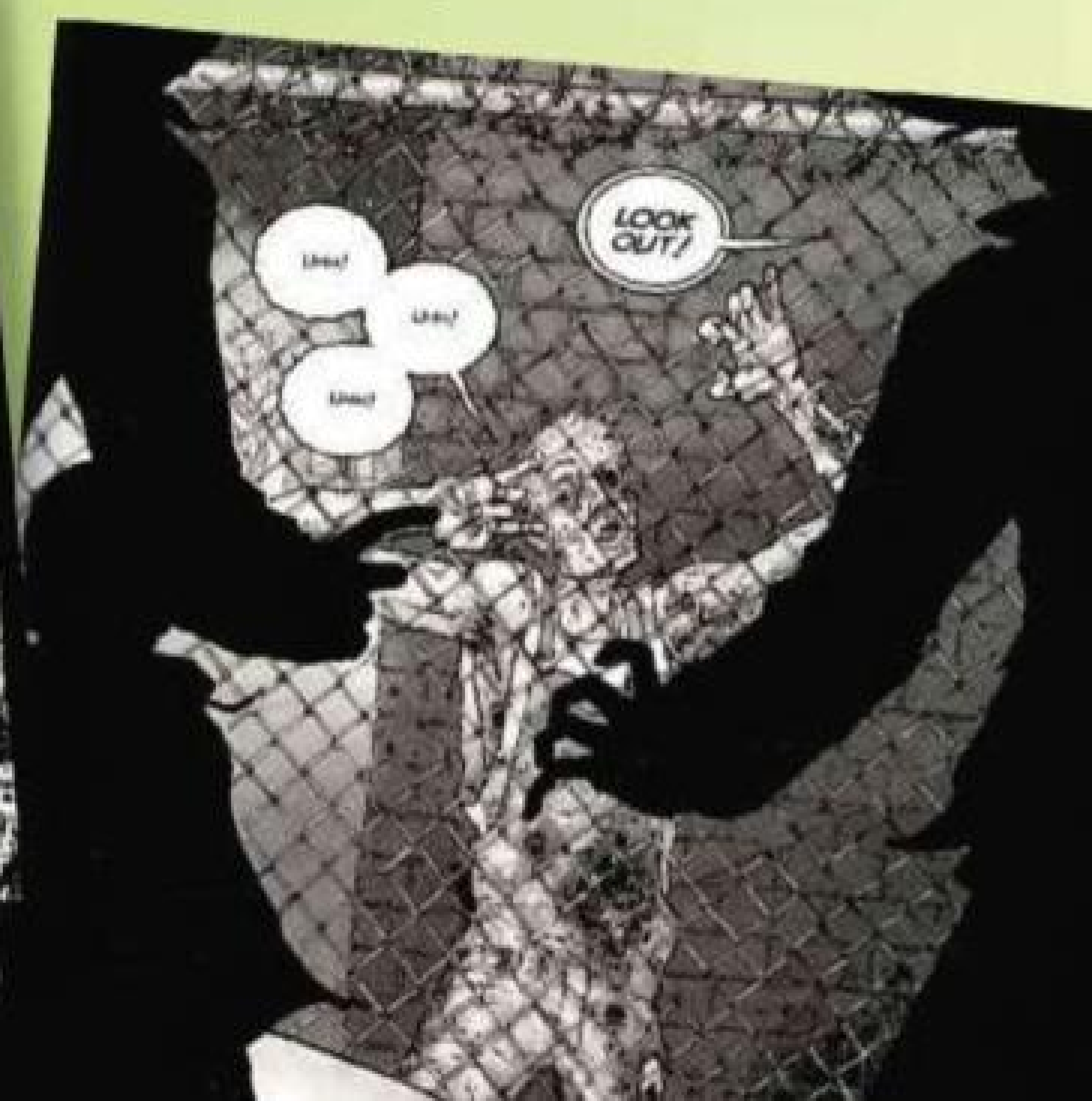
BICYCLE GIRL

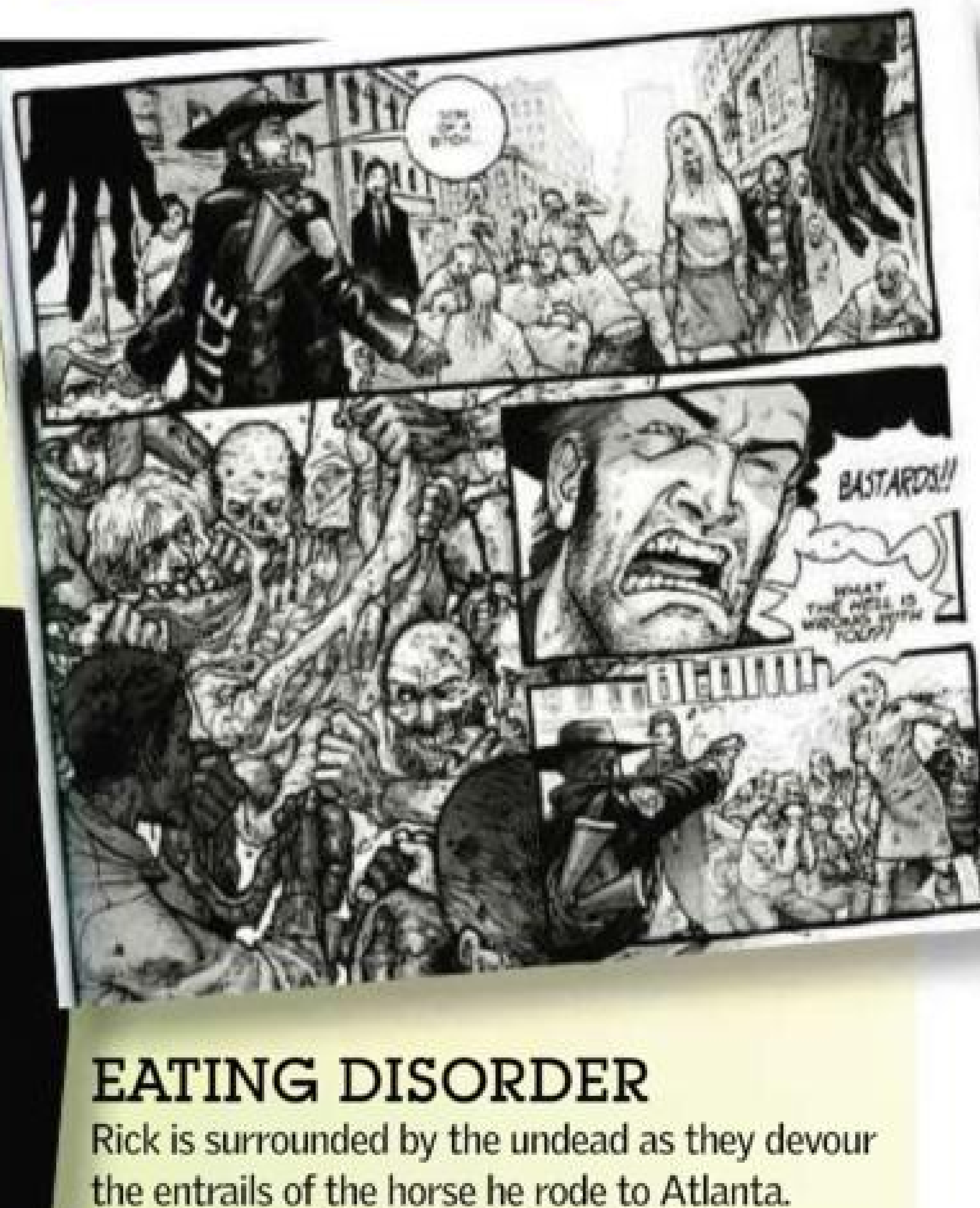
The first live zombie Rick meets after he awakes, who was faithfully recreated for the show (left).



GOOD COP, BAD COP

An example of where the show's plot diverts from the comicbook's, on screen this random zombie is one of Rick's colleagues.

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EATING DISORDER

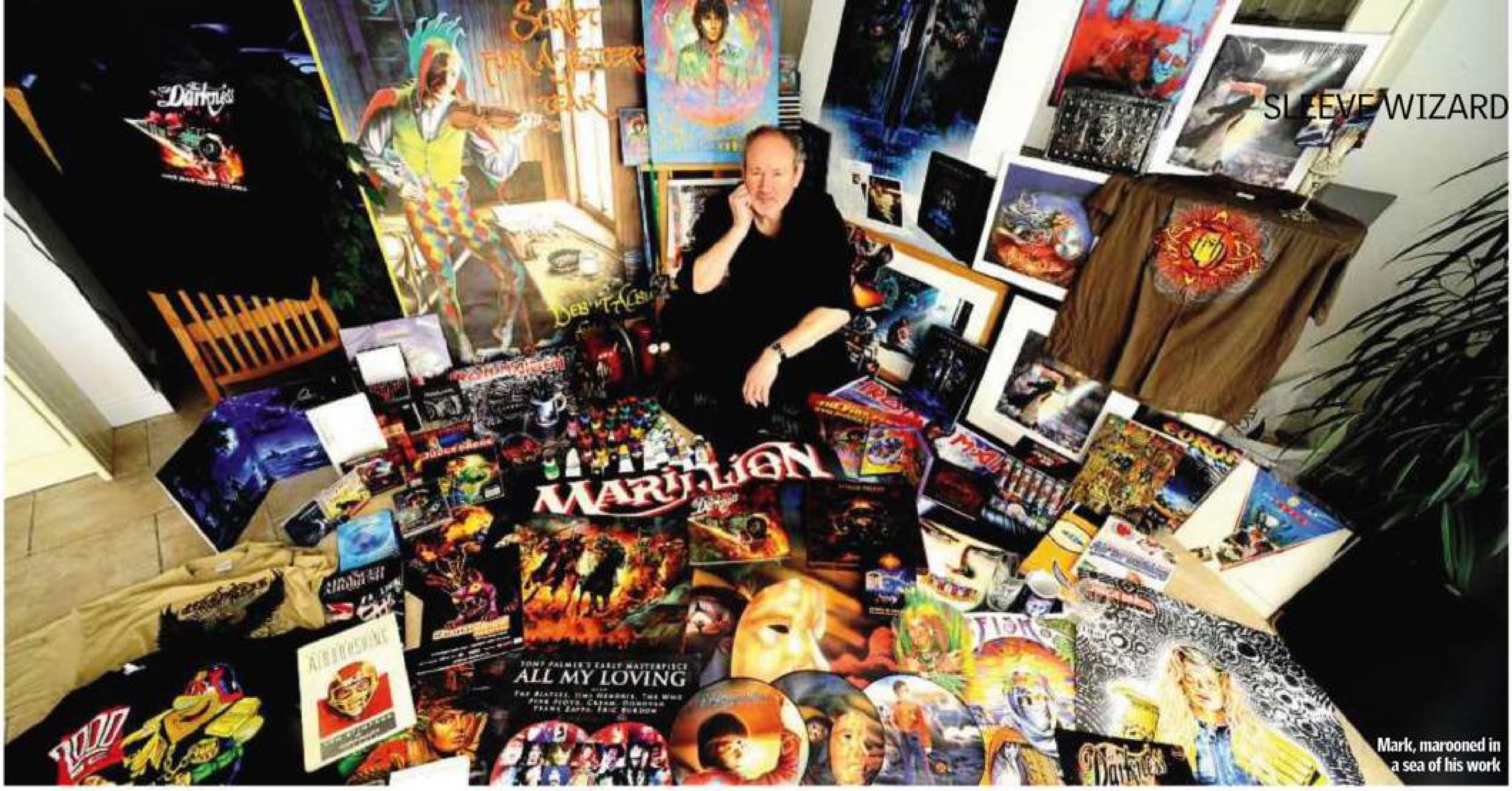
Rick is surrounded by the undead as they devour the entrails of the horse he rode to Atlanta.

Prog rock album artist **Mark Wilkinson** talks psychedelia, weird dudes with beards and being stamped on the population's chest

MAKING A MARK

WORDS **ELEANOR GOODMAN**

The cover for Judas Priest's 1988 album, *Ram It Down*



Mark, marooned in a sea of his work

As a teenager, Mark Wilkinson used to skip school to gaze at records in Audiocraft, Windsor's finest music shop. "At the time there were American album covers by Rick Griffin and The Grateful Dead, underground magazines such as *Oz*, and *International Times*, and fantastic posters on the streets of London," he remembers. "It really seemed as though all the grey was disappearing and we were entering a Technicolor world."

Years later, Wilkinson's work would be on their shelves. He's responsible for Iron Maiden's Wicker Man, Judas Priest's clenched fist, Marillion's jester, and the Download dog, now seen on covers, posters and T-shirts worldwide.

His journey from fan to artist started in 1972, when he went to art college in Watford after seeing an advertisement in a rock magazine. One of his visiting lecturers was Graham Palfrey-Rogers, the art director for The Beatles' *Magical Mystery Tour*. After the course, he asked Wilkinson to join him in his Covent Garden studio – though the psychedelic scene he'd fallen in love with had gone.

"Punk music was at its height, and all those brightly coloured things that had influenced me so much had been replaced with cut-up imagery, like The Sex Pistols, Jamie Reid-style of things," says Wilkinson, "It seemed a lot harder to get involved in the industry, so I got more involved in book and magazine illustrations."

One in a Marillion chance

Wilkinson's big break came in the early 1980s, when he was asked to work on a jester concept for prog rockers Marillion. "They were probably the perfect band for me, because they were re-introducing a progressive style of rock music at a time when it was deeply unpopular," he explains. "They looked towards the album covers that were around in their youth, when the first phase of prog rock started – the likes of Roger Dean and King Crimson, Yes and Genesis."

When Marillion's music got big, T-shirts sporting Wilkinson's designs were only beaten in sales by Iron Maiden shirts. From here, Wilkinson was asked to design the merchandise for Monsters Of Rock, then Judas Priest's *Ram It Down*, *Painkiller*, and *Angel Of Retribution*.

Comic timing

Aside from music, Wilkinson dabbled in comicbooks after meeting bearded graphic novelist Alan Moore. "I saw this guy walking around the village where I live, and he stood out because he had long hair and gothy clothes," explains Wilkinson. "When we became friends he asked me if I fancied doing something for Judge Dredd."

Wilkinson's currently creating artwork for a live DVD of The Cramps, a Ginger Baker's Airforce DVD, and a commission for an erotica exhibition in Denmark. While he's too busy for personal projects, he wouldn't have it any other way. "I remember taking my kids to Alton Towers and sitting in a roller coaster. My son looked at someone in front and said, 'Daddy, he's wearing your T-shirt!'" laughs Wilkinson. "It's a real thrill and it's what I always wanted to do – so be careful what you dream of!"

SHADOWPLAY

SEE MORE OF MARK'S ART in his book *Shadowplay*, distributed by Turnaround and available from Amazon.co.uk

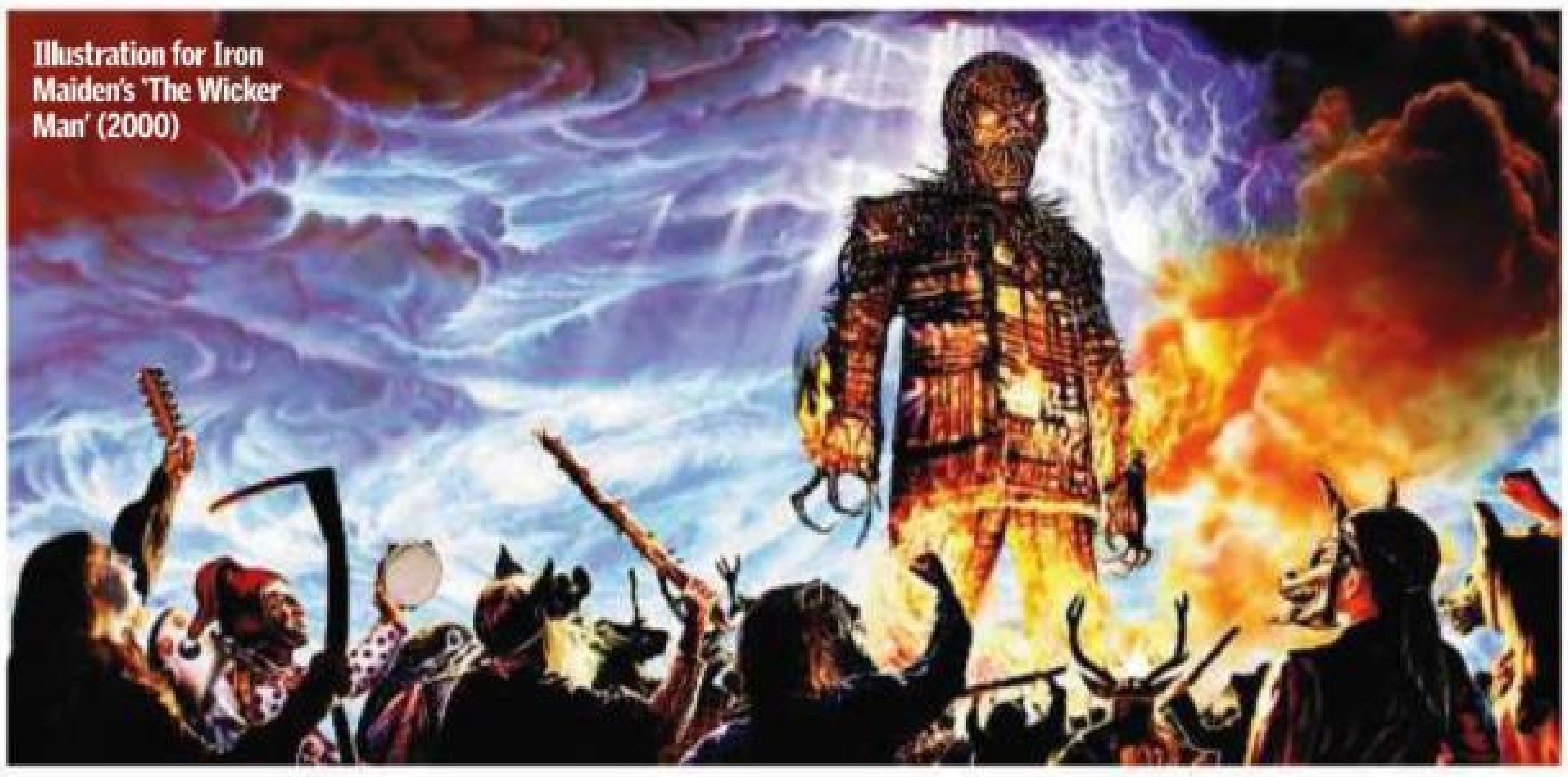
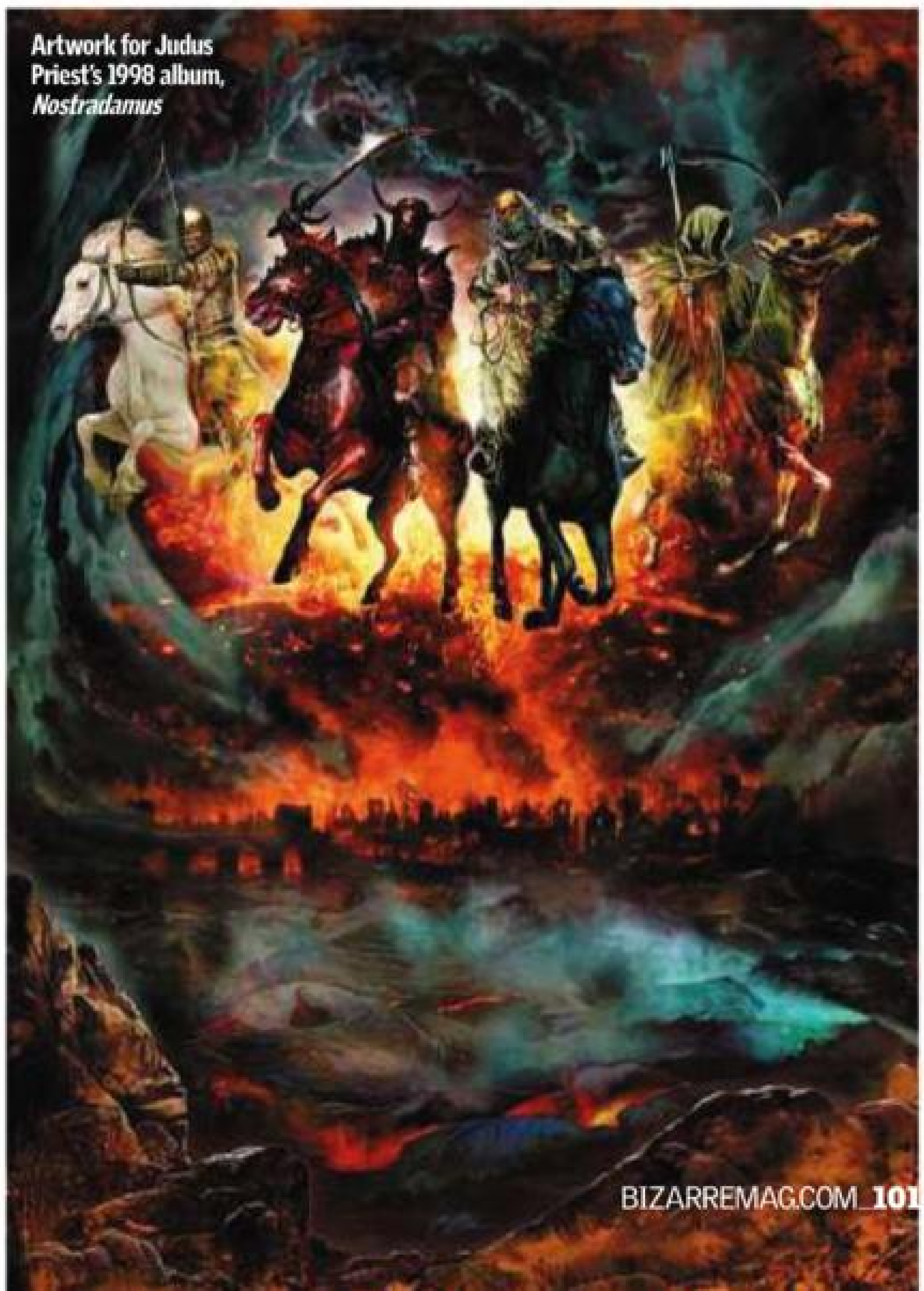
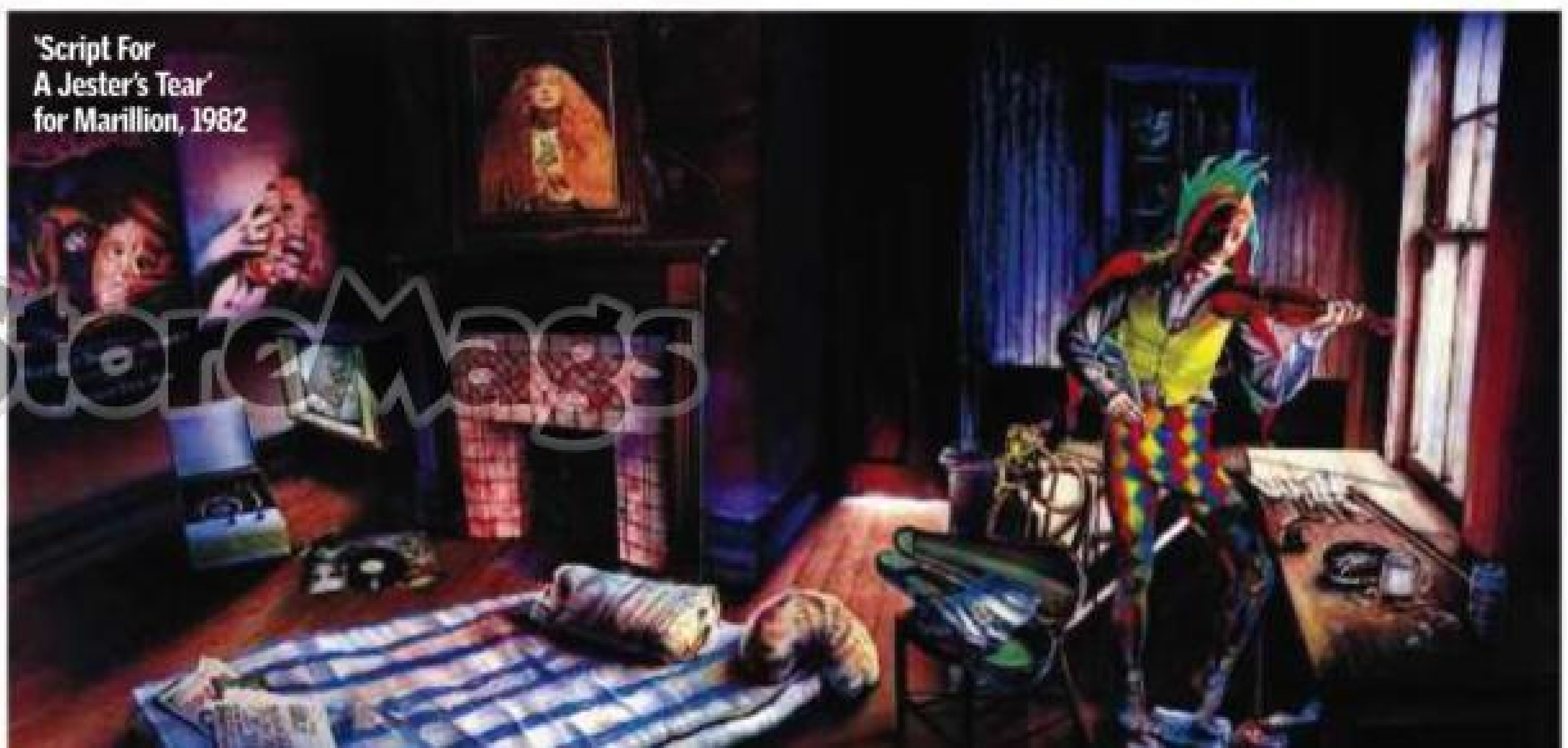


Illustration for Iron Maiden's 'The Wicker Man' (2000)



Artwork for Judus Priest's 1998 album, *Nostradamus*



'Script For A Jester's Tear' for Marillion, 1982

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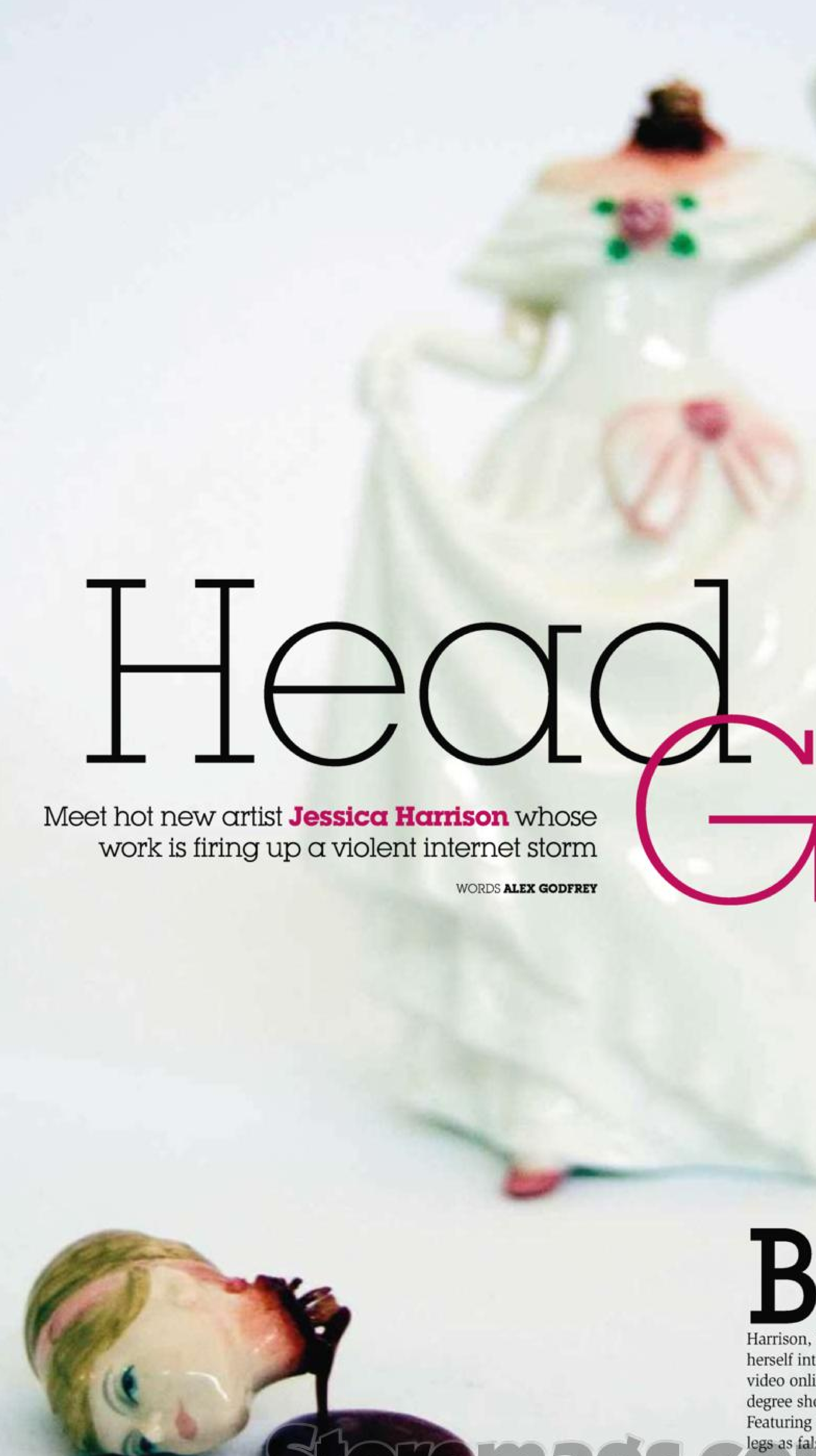


Head Girl

Meet hot new artist **Jessica Harrison** whose work is firing up a violent internet storm

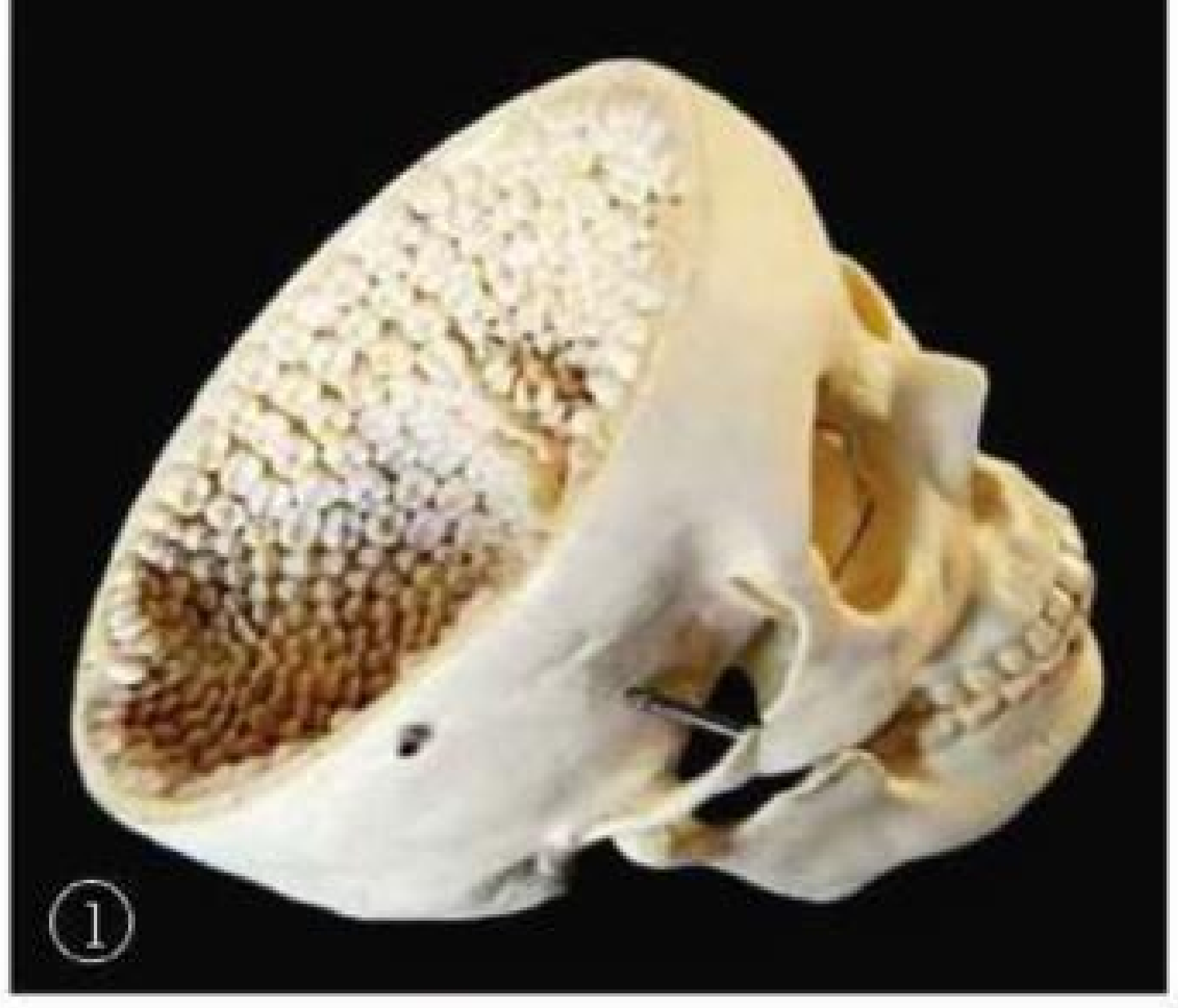
WORDS **ALEX GODFREY**

Being a new artist on the block and learning to deal with criticism takes courage, especially if you're working with parts of dead creatures. Britain's up-and-coming talent, Jessica Harrison, had no idea what she was getting herself into during July when she posted an old video online that she made for her postgraduate degree show at Edinburgh College Of Art in 2006. Featuring a close-up of her blinking, wearing flies' legs as false lashes, the film got animal rights activists in a spin and fashion hounds reeling. Originally part of a collection of artworks called *Motor Mouth*, which she put together for an installation exploring fear, mutilation and medical →

experiments, the 'Flylashes' video has been exhibited in over 40 shows over the past five years. But it didn't explode into people's consciousness until it appeared online and became a viral hit that was out of Jessica's control. The artist has been dissected everywhere from fashion blogs to PETA forums, with one raging critic saying, "If only I could see her and tear her eyes out, then she'd know how (the flies) felt."

A controversial buzz

The 28-year-old from Whitehaven, Scotland, responded to her attackers, explaining that "no flies were tortured or murdered" for the piece. In fact, she'd bought maggots from a fishing shop, which hatched in her studio and buzzed around until they died naturally. But she pulled the video off the net anyway, not wishing to offend people. "I hadn't done anything like that before," she says. "At art school, when I made the video, I was pushed to try new things so that I wouldn't get stuck in a creative rut. Maybe I was a bit naïve – thinking that because the flies were destined for a fishing line, and then got to fly around before they died, that it wouldn't be a problem – but some people still didn't like it. I wouldn't do it again."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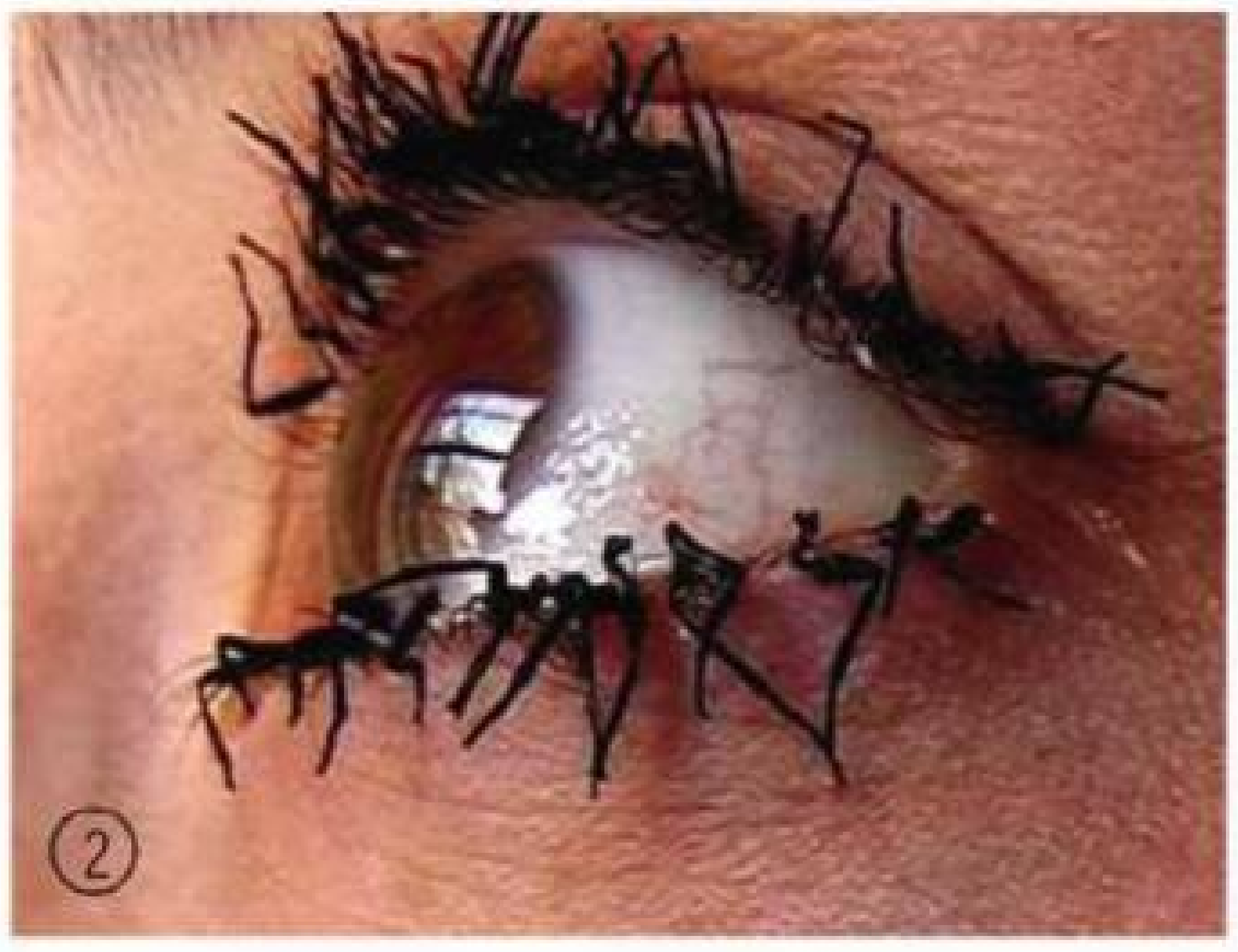
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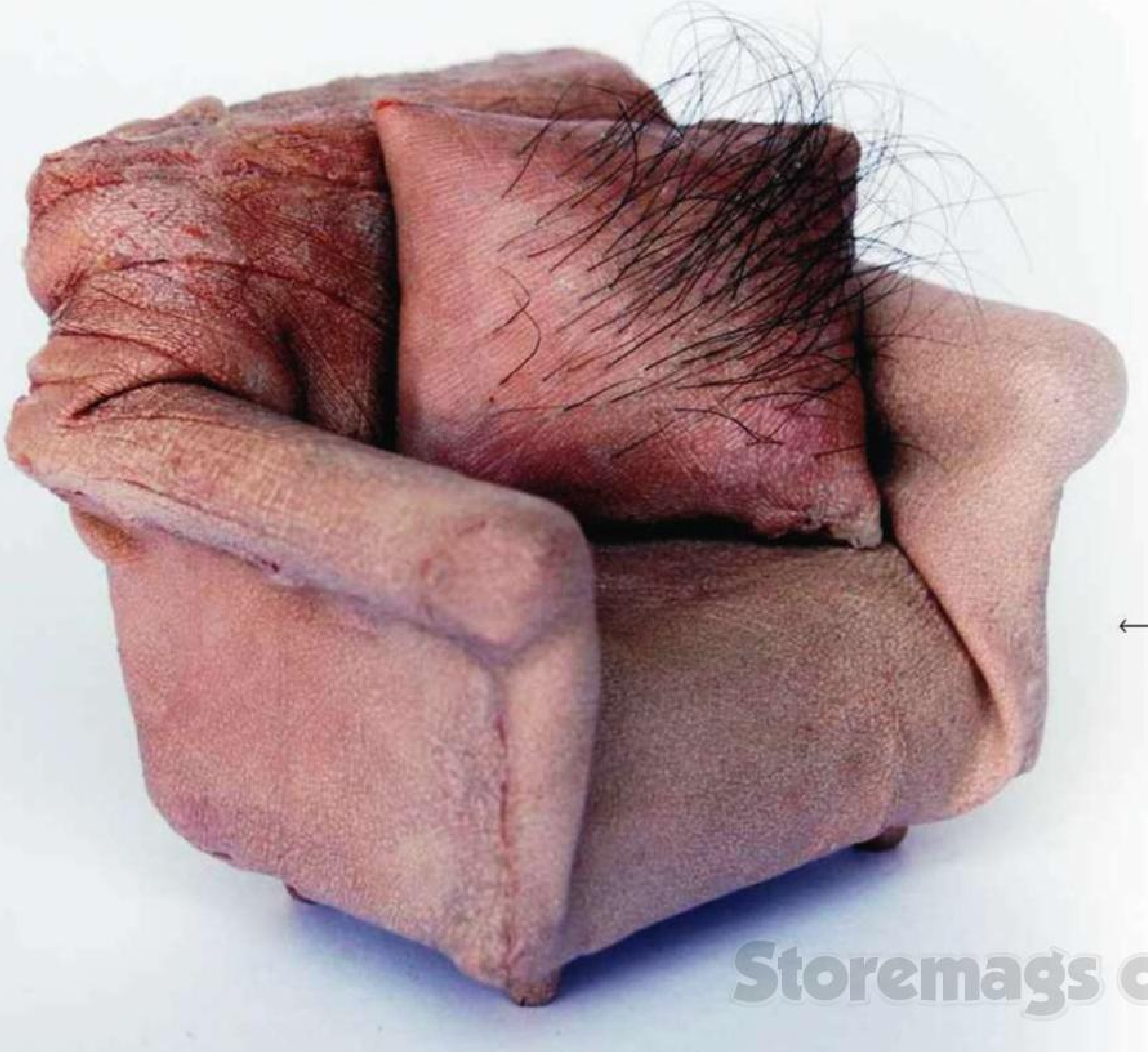
Jessica's career began early, when she exhibited her first work and started going to life drawing classes aged 10. "It's good to start that sort of thing when you're young," she says, explaining that despite wanting "to crawl into a big hole" at the sight of a naked man, the experience gave her the confidence to do what she wanted. "I was into science at school," she explains, "and interested in how the world works, how life came about, how we function, and how we experience and react to objects. I've always been curious about what's inside or behind something."

Gritting her teeth

Jessica's curiosity shows in her work, much of which explores fear. For an exhibition in 2005, she made an installation that incorporated teeth cast from her extracted molars, and

> "I had to get a tooth pulled out and five fillings in one sitting. The thought of getting that done was terrifying"



① SKULL, SKULL INTERIOR
"I got into the Medusa myth, and the dangers of looking too deeply into one's own body. I like this piece. I tried to get a real skull but they're difficult to get hold of, so this one is made of plastic, which I sanded down to look more bone-like. The teeth are made of wax."

② FLYLASHES
"I wasn't grossed out doing this. I wasn't thinking, 'This is dangerous, flies carry disease,' I was thinking, 'This is gonna be a really interesting image that'll provoke lots of questions'. But it seems from the blogs that it just makes people wanna vomit."

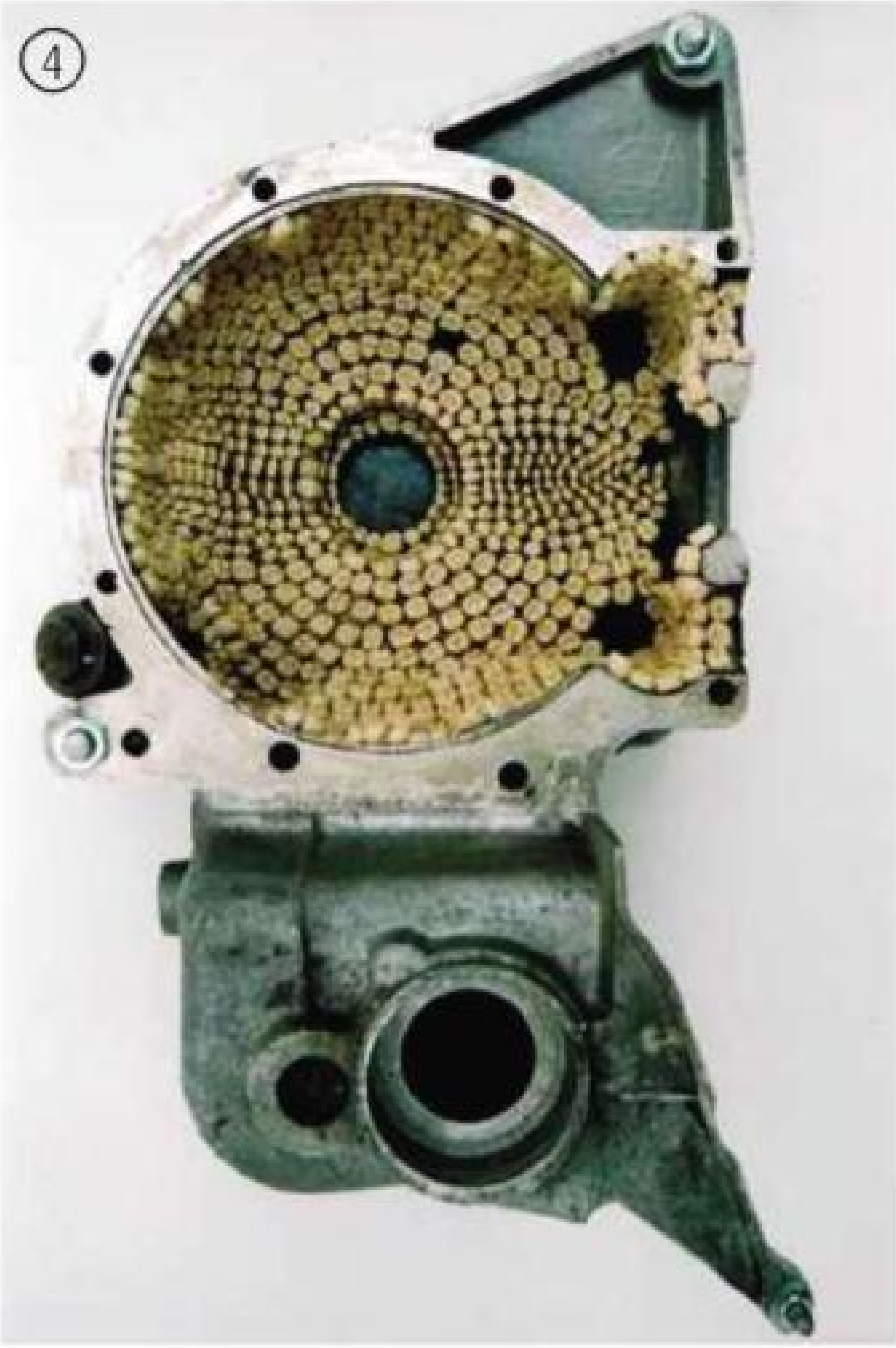
← ③ HAND HELD
"I sent these pieces to Australia last year for an exhibition. Customs there is so strict I had to write 'This is not skin' on the package and explain to them how I made it. I put a sample in to show it wasn't real skin – I thought they might think it was pig skin, because it's pretty convincing."

④ MOTOR MOUTH , MOTOR NO 2 , DOME NO 1 , DOME NO 2 , DOME NO 10
"The small teeth play on the idea that even though Victorian preserved animals or body parts once had a function, now they're a bit terrifying because we don't really understand what they were originally for. The teeth in my artworks are meant to look as though they're useful for something."

a film inspired by what she thought would be a harrowing trip to the dentist. "I wanted to look at things that people are afraid of, because what we're frightened of is often what we're most curious about" she says. "Before I started working on the exhibition I had to get a tooth pulled out and five fillings in one sitting. I'm not particularly scared of the dentist, but the thought of getting all of that done at once was terrifying. So I took a video camera with me and filmed the whole horrible thing, then chopped it up, sped parts up and slowed parts down, to make it even more terrifying."

'Flylashes' is also about people's interest in scary objects. Taking inspiration from Victorian freakshows, Jessica wanted to explore society's fearful fascination with mutant things. "In old sideshows the 'freakish' was built up, faked and manipulated," she says. "I put the flies on myself because I wanted to bring that curious quality back to the body." And she succeeded. When 'Flylashes' was shown in London it attracted →

④



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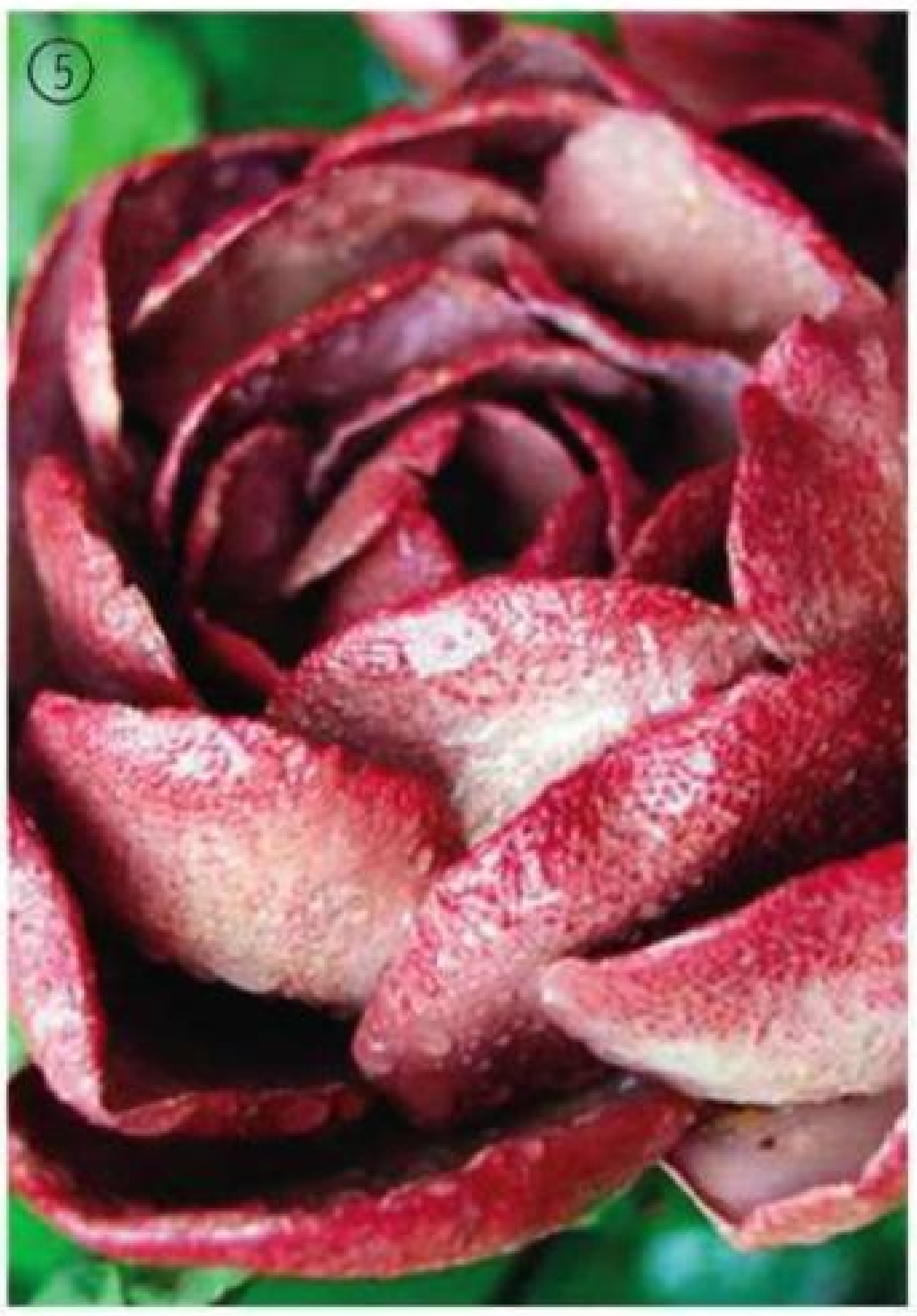
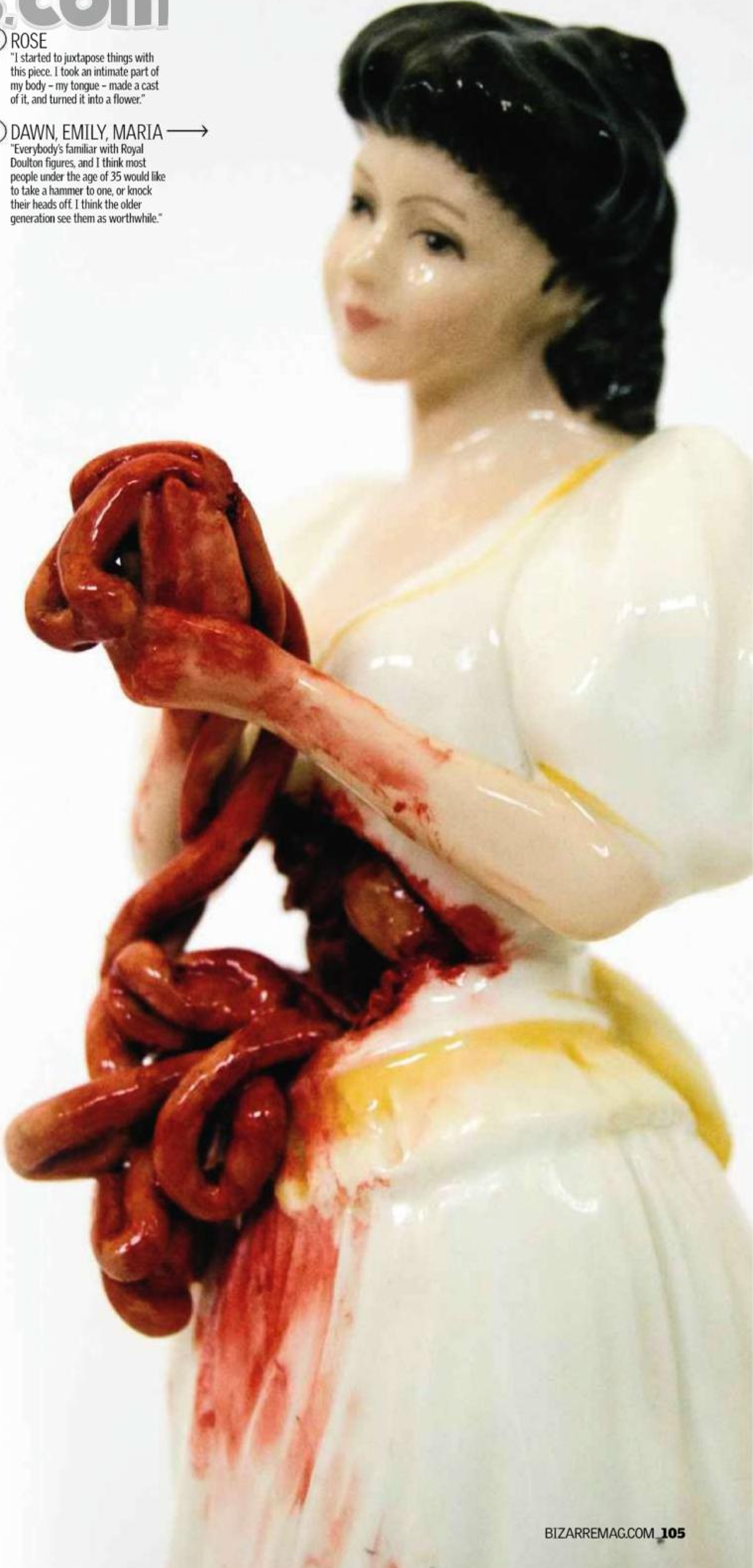


⑤ ROSE

"I started to juxtapose things with this piece. I took an intimate part of my body – my tongue – made a cast of it, and turned it into a flower."

⑥ DAWN, EMILY, MARIA →

"Everybody's familiar with Royal Doulton figures, and I think most people under the age of 35 would like to take a hammer to one, or knock their heads off. I think the older generation see them as worthwhile."



Pick an art that's new

Other kooky up-and-coming creative folk to look out for

'Beetle Juice Brooch'

Märta Mattsson

Jewellery designer Marta graduated with an MA from London's Royal College of Art this year. Her pieces include brooches featuring Siamese twin mouse foetuses, and necklaces made of realistic rubber maggots, fingernail clippings, and eels. She'll be exhibiting her work in Tokyo in November.

Martamattsson.com

'Arbusculae Ambulo Pot Plant'

Miles Gavin

This Central Saint Martins student did an internship with Liz McGrath, and makes teeny, china replicas of her work. He also creates *Little Shop Of Horrors*-esque plant pots that look as though their contents have sprouted arms, legs, and evil intentions.

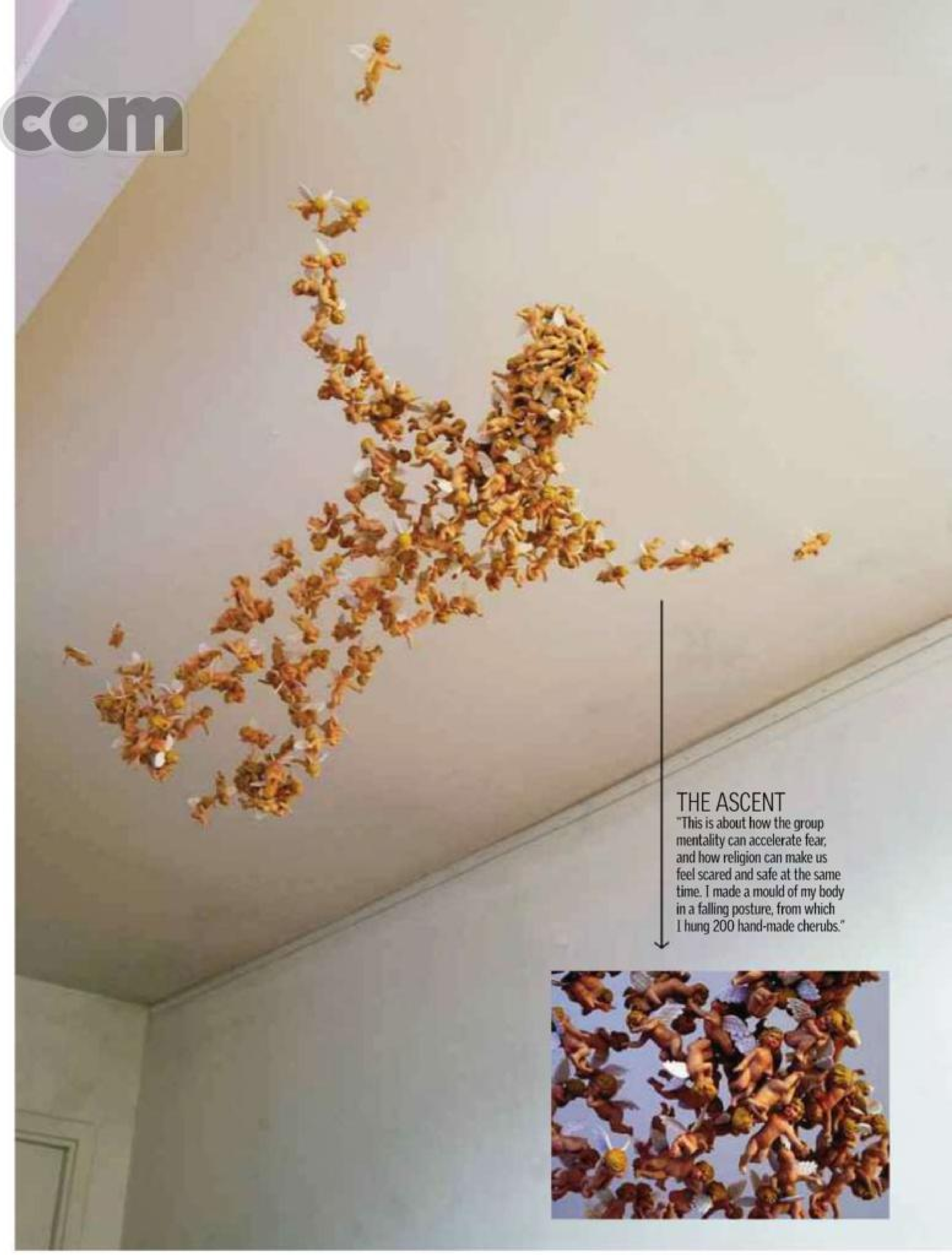
Milesgavin.com

'Die Now Pay Later'

Emma Gibson

This installation artist's work includes one-arm bandits that spit out tips on how to assist someone's suicide, and a sculpture that suggests how you can read a man's character from the shape of his penis. Her work is on show now at the *Enchanted Palace* exhibition at Kensington Palace, in London.

Egibson.co.uk



THE ASCENT

"This is about how the group mentality can accelerate fear, and how religion can make us feel scared and safe at the same time. I made a mould of my body in a falling posture, from which I hung 200 hand-made cherubs."

> "In old sideshows the 'freakish' was faked. I put the flies on myself to bring that freakish quality back to the body"

the attention of the StolenSpace gallery, which still represents her. But her greatest exposure has been on the net, leaving her open to uninformed criticism.

"Online, you can't control the context in which people see the video. I noticed that 'Flylashes' was being taken as some kind of fashion statement, but that's not what it's about. I'm not parading around in a meat bikini, it's not fashion. And it's also not representative of what I'm doing at the moment."

Pretty gutsy artwork

That's not to say her latest work isn't getting its fair share of attention. Her sculpture titled 'Hand Held' – miniature furniture that looks as though it's made of skin, and was meant to be picked up by gallery-goers had it not turned out to be too fragile – got bloggers' pulses racing last year, and her series of pretty ceramic figurines pulling out their own guts have also been an internet hit. She got the idea after hitting a Royal Doulton ceramic one day to see which bit would snap off.

"My ceramic figurines aim to juxtapose the inside and outside of something," Jessica says. "A blog somewhere picked up the images of my figurines and they spread everywhere," she continues. "I was away in Ireland on an artists' residency, with no internet, and I had no idea what was happening. When I came back my inbox was jammed and there were loads of blogs about me. I was overwhelmed.

So what can we expect next? A few small, independent directors have asked Jessica to work on music videos, but she's not interested, so instead she's concentrating on completing her sculpture PhD at Edinburgh College Of Art and wants to do more work with ceramics. She's also keen to take up an artists' residency in Lithuania. Whatever she does, it's sure to be interesting. She's going to be huge, so watch this space.

See more of Jess' work at Jessicaharrison.co.uk

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Body

Step into the garage of a mechanic-turned-mortician, who's one of a growing number of Guatemalans profiting from the country's high murder rate

Shop

WORDS **SORREL NEUSS**
PHOTOS **RODRIGO ABD/AP/PA PHOTOS**

Inside a mechanic's garage in Guatemala City, Don Carlos scoffs his lunch at a table set on an oil-spattered floor littered with ratchets, car batteries, jacks, hubcaps and… coffins. While the sign over the entrance to Don Carlos' garage says 'Car Repairs', he doesn't just use the workshop to tinker with clapped-out old motors. Since 2007, he's also been using it to embalm, disembowel and prettify corpses for the grave.

Don Carlos is just one of hundreds of backstreet funeral directors called *calaqueros*, or 'skullmongers', who profit from the capital's high murder rate. They compete for business in front of the deceased's relatives, transport bullet-ridden corpses in rusty pick-up trucks, and gut, clean and dress bodies at any location they can find – usually inside houses. More are springing up across the city every month.

Guatemala is still recovering from a civil war, which took place between 1960-1996, in which a quarter of a million people died. It's now battling rampant street crime by youth gangs called *maras*, and cartels who use Central →

storemags

Funeral home workers eat during a break on their night shift

The body of murder victim lies in the Valle del Sol funeral home

America as a corridor to smuggle cocaine, weapons and people to the US. Last year, more than 5,300 people in a population of 13.7m were murdered – most of them shot – so death is big business. Just over half of Guatemalans can't afford enough food, so budget funeral directors are in demand. The number of *calaqueros* has doubled since 2005 and the price of their services, which is around 10 or 20 times less than posh funeral directors, has been slashed in half to $200 due to increased competition.

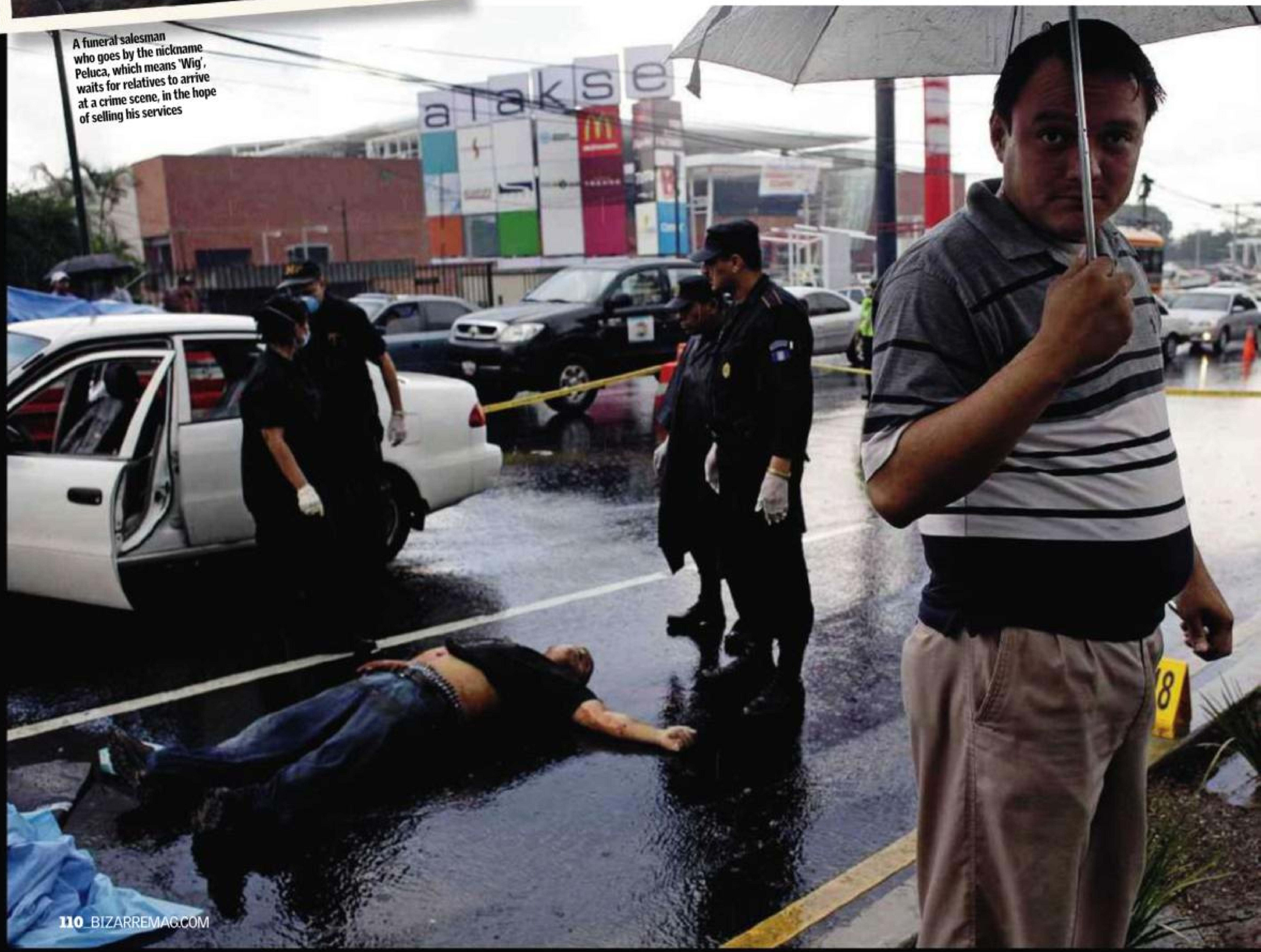
Touting for trade

When Don Carlos was a full-time mechanic, he'd see scores of bodies being brought in and out of the morgue on the opposite side of the road. So when he got chatting to *calaqueros* who hang around outside offering their services to bereaved relatives, he realised he'd make more money if he joined them, and got them to teach him everything they know.

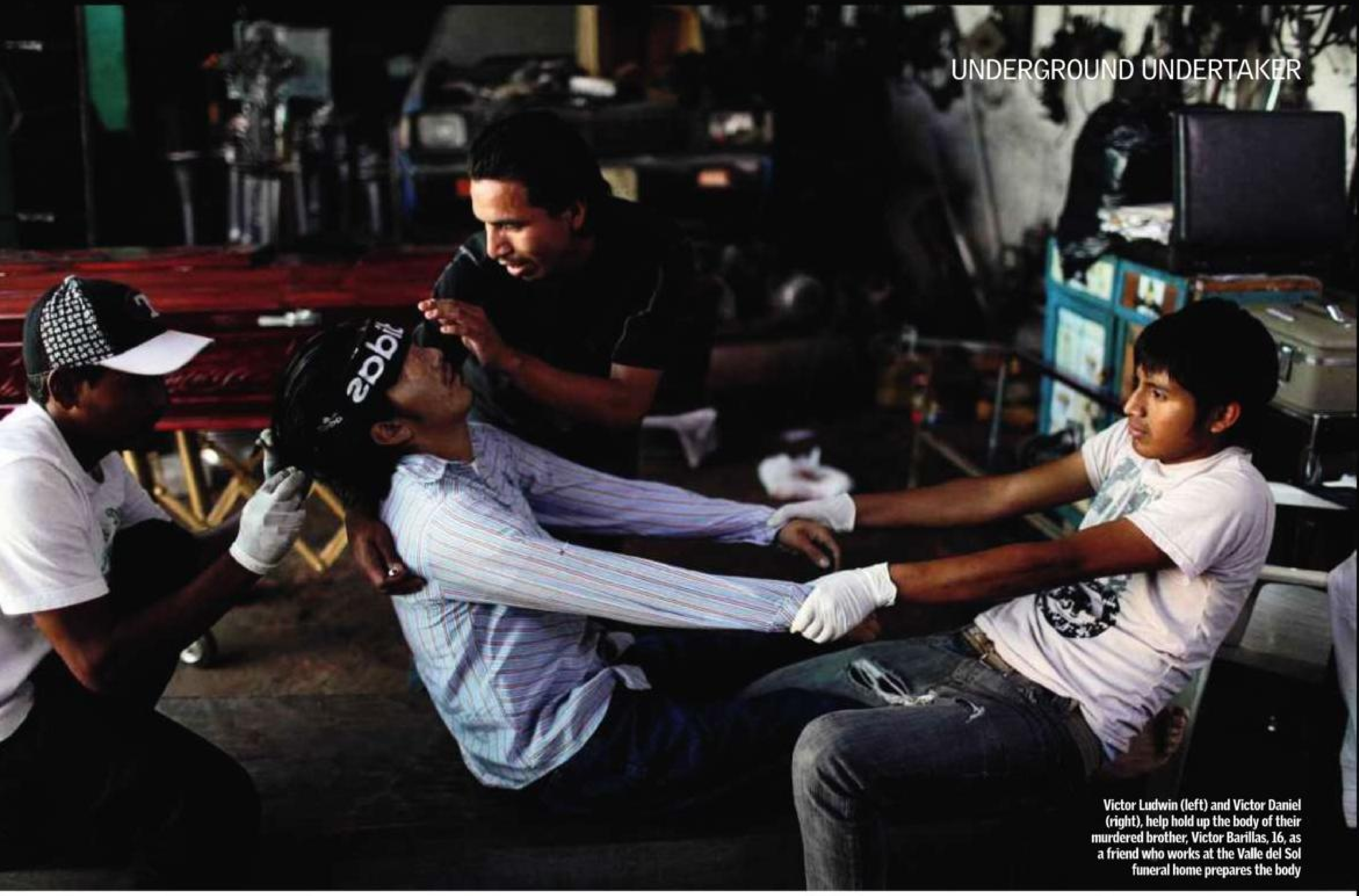
Don Carlos' undertakers business is called Valle del Sol, or Sun Valley, and he employees three men. The workshop is filthy, has no air extraction, and doesn't conform to Government Health Ministry standards, but the authorities are so cash-strapped that they don't have the resources to regulate *calaqueros* or inspect their premises. Photographer Rodrigo Abd, who took the pictures on these pages, describes the garage. "When Don Carlos' employees take a break from work, they nap on dirty coats on the hard floor, and it's amazing that they can," he says. "The smell is unbearable. The thick stench of engine oil, gases from the bodies and the sickly chemical smell of embalming fluid is so strong."

The men graft hard, working on around six bodies a day. But first they have to get them. The police are overwhelmed with murder cases, bribed to turn a blind eye, and frightened of gangs, so bodies are often sent to the morgue within 10 hours of death. In a scramble to get custom from a dead person's relatives before the competition gets there first, *calaqueros* pay policemen and firemen a cut of their fee to call them up when there's been an accident or a shootout. Sleeping among coffins, next to the

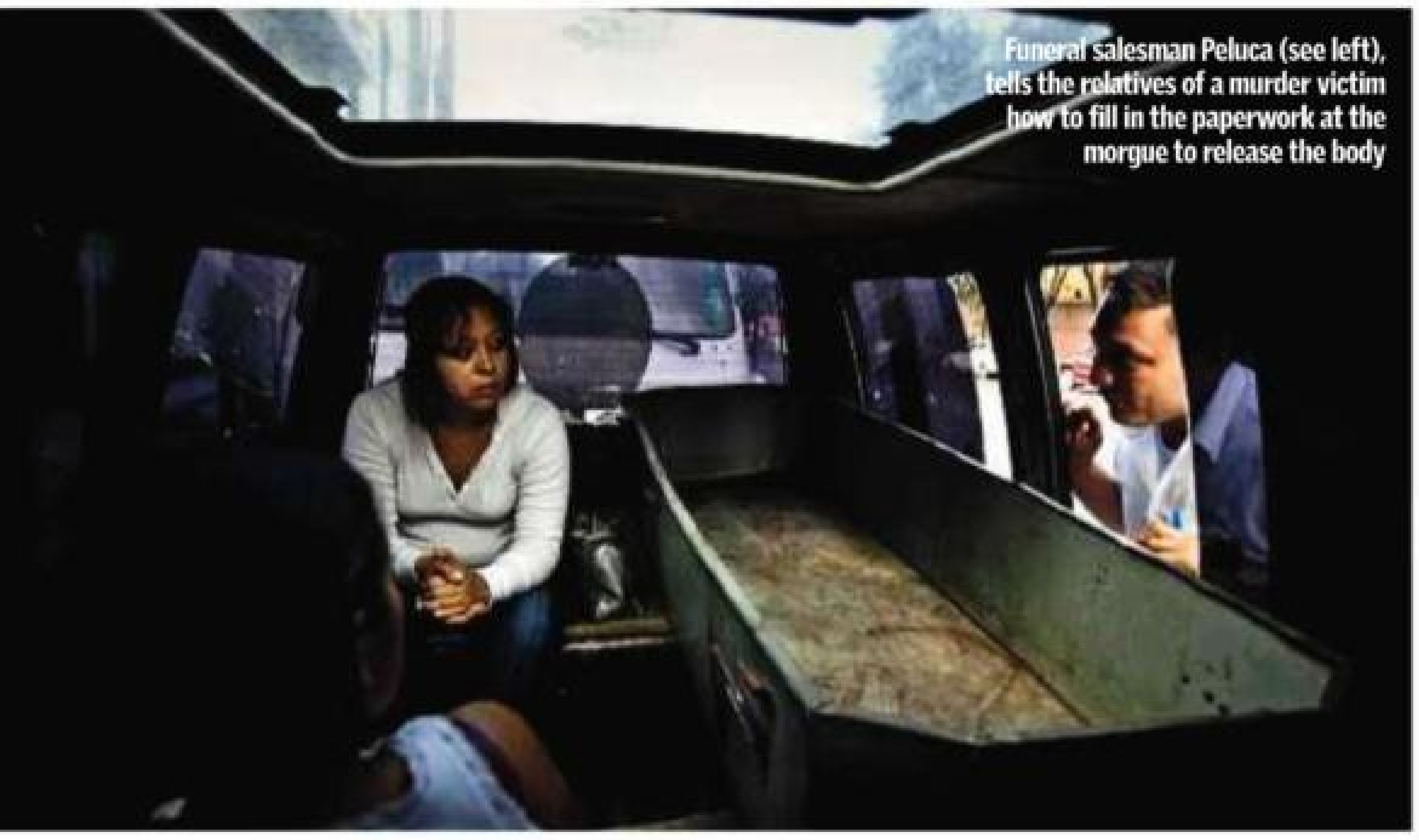
"There's a thick stench of engine oil, gases from the bodies, and sickly embalming fluid"



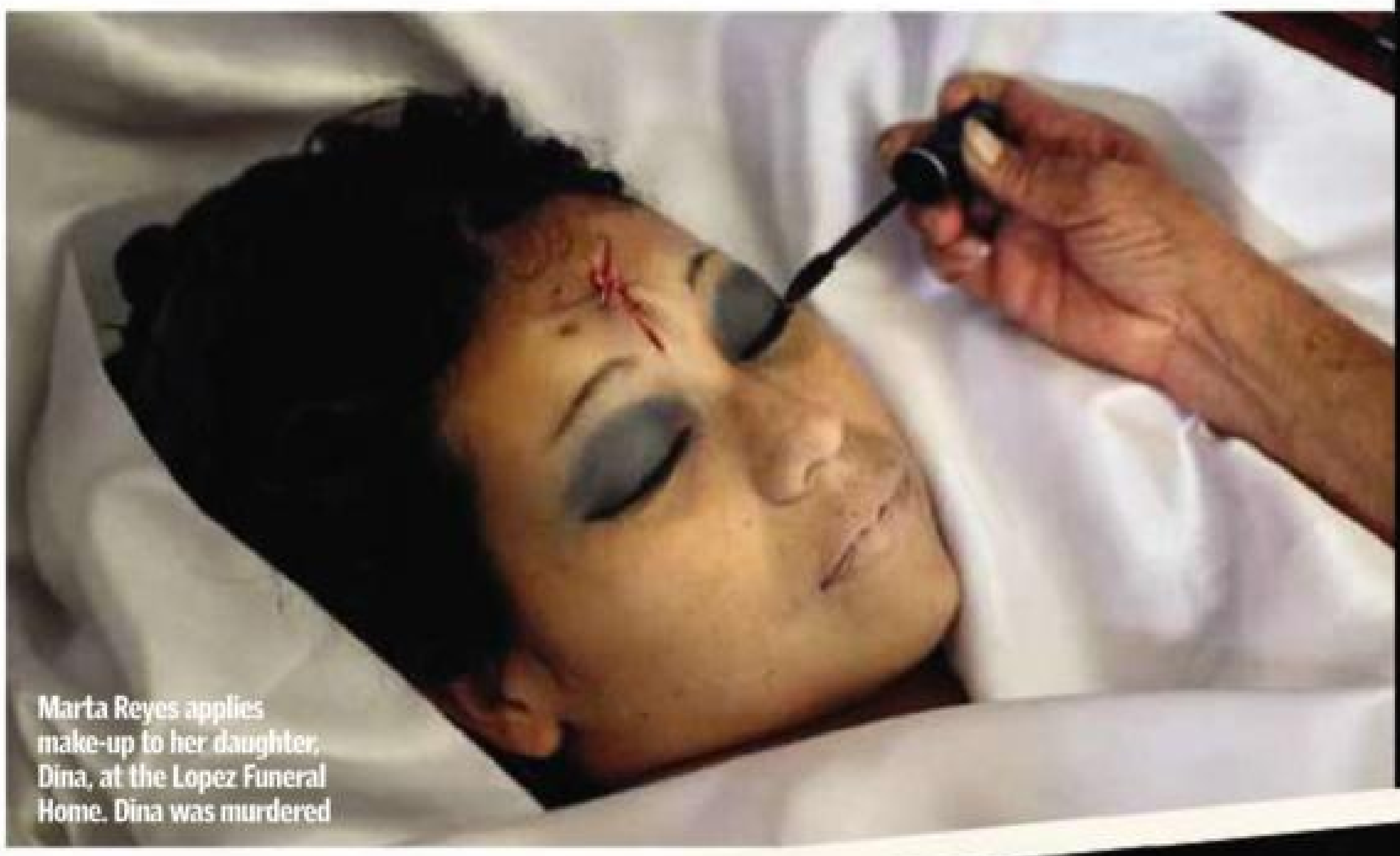
A funeral salesman who goes by the nickname Peluca, which means 'Wig', waits for relatives to arrive at a crime scene, in the hope of selling his services



Victor Ludwin (left) and Victor Daniel (right), help hold up the body of their murdered brother, Victor Barillas, 16, as a friend who works at the Valle del Sol funeral home prepares the body



Funeral salesman Peluca (see left), tells the relatives of a murder victim how to fill in the paperwork at the morgue to release the body



Marta Reyes applies make-up to her daughter, Dina, at the Lopez Funeral Home. Dina was murdered

phone during the night, and touting for business outside the morgue clutching their mobiles during the day, Don Carlos and his boys are ready to jump into action at any time.

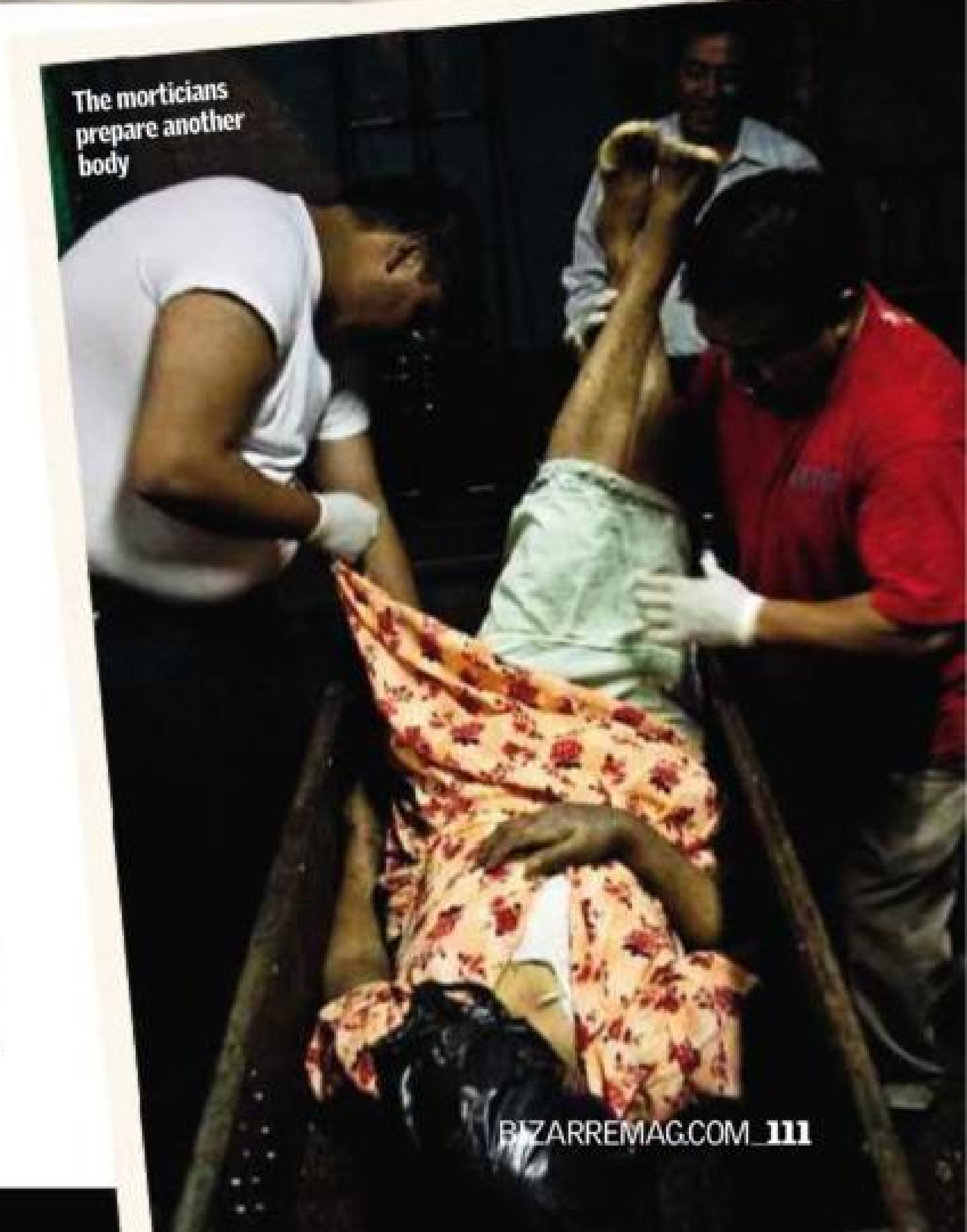
Rodrigo explains that when the *calaqueros* arrive at a murder scene or an accident, they fight with the competition over who has dibs on the customer. "*Calaqueros* treat their customers like prey sometimes," he reveals. "Once, the dead person's family was there when a man had just been shot and the *calaqueros* were being so disrespectful – jostling each other, shouting and being aggressive. The relatives were frightened and didn't stand up for themselves."

Preparing a body

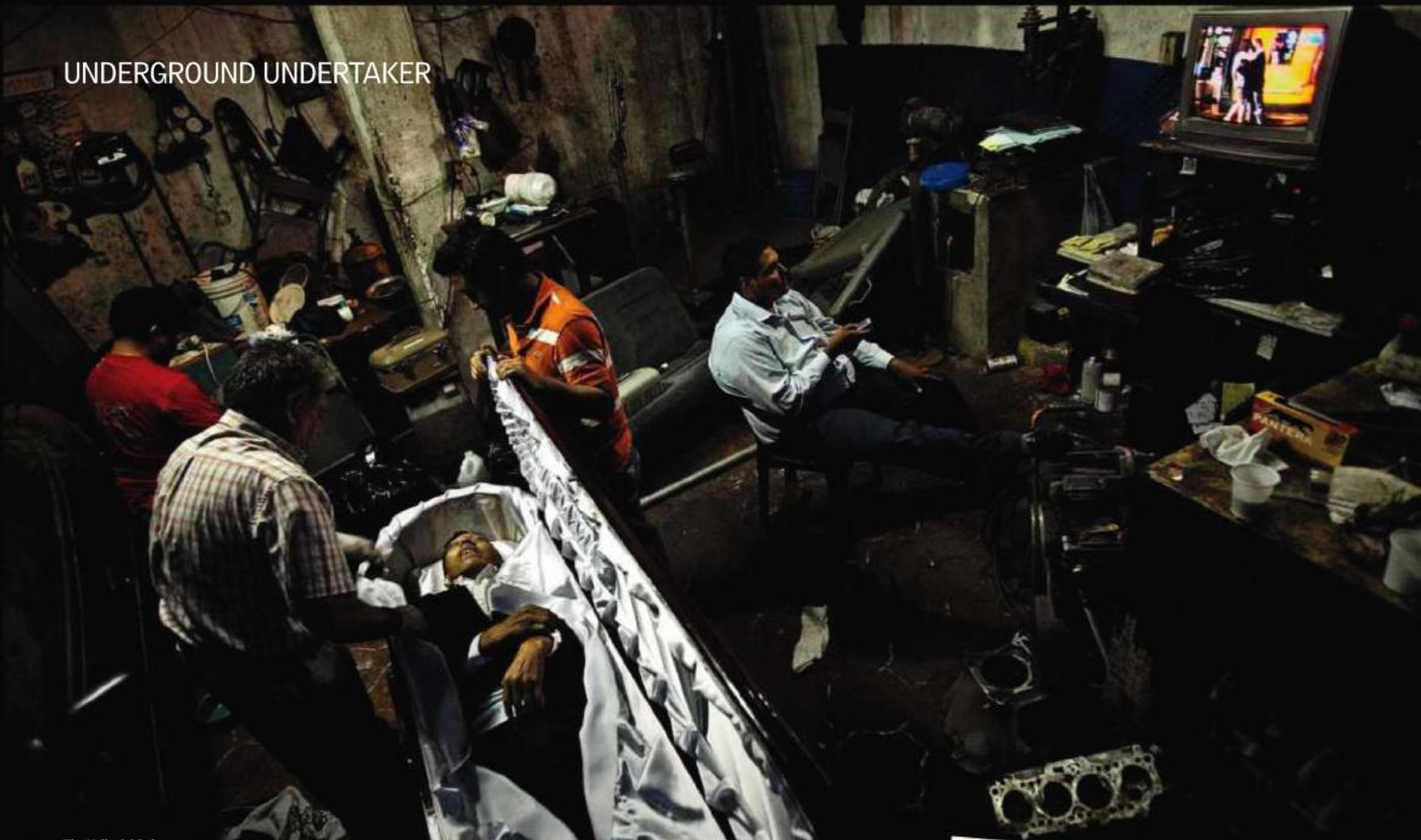
If the men from Valle de Sol have got lucky and clinched a deal, they head off to the morgue when the body is ready to be released, which is usually two to three days after death, and sign official papers. Then they put the corpse in the back of a rusty old banger with scrapes down the side. Back at the garage, they lie the corpse on a table and get stuck in.

Don Carlos' *calaqueros* are so practiced at preparing a body that it only takes an hour and a half. First, they wash the naked body with a rag soaked in embalming fluid – a mixture of alcohol, methanol and formaldehyde. Then they use a scalpel to cut the torso from the chest to the abdomen, reopening the incision that the mortician made in the post mortem. It's illegal to dump body parts in the trash so, after pulling out the guts and vital organs, the *calaqueros* put them in a black plastic bin liner, tie it up and put it back inside the body. Using thick, black thread and a curved surgeon's needle, the men sew the stomach back up and give it another wipe down before cleaning their tools in plain water at a sink. "It's like they're doing the washing up in the kitchen," says Rodrigo.

Next, two of them heave the body off the table – one grabbing the feet, the other gripping the top half under the arms – and put it into the coffin →



The morticians prepare another body



The Valle del Sol funeral home is also a mechanic's shop

"Many people have had more than one relative killed, and just want the body fixed up quickly"

chosen by the dead person's relatives. After squeezing surgical glue from a tube onto the corpse's eyelids to keep them closed, the *calaqueros* begin to dress the body and apply make-up to the face. Sometimes friends or family members prefer to do this themselves, and Rodrigo watched a woman in a different funeral directors making up her daughter who'd been shot in the forehead. "It was the most difficult thing I've ever seen," he says. "The mother was talking to her child, saying, 'Don't you like this dress? Look at how beautiful you are with this eyeshadow on'. She was stroking her hair and speaking so tenderly."

Driving to the cemetery

While some funeral directors have set aside a place for dressing the body, relatives are not usually allowed in the workshop. They visit the office – which at many *calaqueros'* premises is their living room or kitchen – to choose the coffin and explain their wishes for the body. Rodrigo says that even if relatives are upset by the ramshackle surroundings, they don't dwell on it. "Most people don't know what the funeral directors do in the workshop and just use them because they're cheaper," he explains. "Many have had more than one relative killed and they just want the body to be fixed up quickly for the funeral. No-one complains. They're poor and they don't have a choice."

A mortician fills the nose with cotton as part of the embalming process

Most people in Guatemala are catholic, so *calaqueros* take the body to the deceased relatives' house where it's displayed in the coffin for a few hours before the funeral. While Don Carlos has hearses, which are battered wrecks, some of the vehicles he and other *calaqueros'* use are pick-up trucks or normal cars that have been converted by ripping out the back seats to make room for the coffin.

Once they've picked up the body and driven it to the cemetery, the *calaqueros'* job is done, and they head back to the workshop to wait for calls from the emergency services, or hang out outside the morgue. It looks as though business will be good for many years to come. As Rodrigo explains, "*Calaqueros* provide a cheap service in a sad situation and, while their methods seem dodgy by Western standards, someone's got to do it." ■

Glendy Maldonado helps Don Carlos to disembowel the body of a murdered man

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Prom night goes wrong in *The Loved Ones* 126

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Staff at the children's hospital were unhappy with their new mural

MONSTERS

Invaders must die! Or help a young couple find love

FIRST OFF, BELIEVE THE HYPE: this strange space invader yarn is one of the year's most beautiful films, which is not something you often hear about a sci-fi flick.

Secondly, ignore media comparisons to gung-ho creature-features such as *Cloverfield* and *District 9*. Contrary to its title, *Monsters* is actually a road movie-cum-love story, that just happens to occur during a time when aliens have set up shop on Earth and threaten mankind's future.

At the heart of the chaos is a photographer who's chaperoning his boss's daughter home from Mexico to America via the so-called 'infected zone' – a region densely populated by gigantic extraterrestrials that resemble something from dark-side author HP Lovecraft's worst nightmare. Of course, their journey doesn't go smoothly, although they learn a lot about themselves, human nature, and the true reason behind the ET's destructive behaviour.

With emotional realism central to these fantastical events, the casting of real-life couple Scoot McNairy and Whitney Able is an inspired choice. As their characters' initial fear transforms into an adrenaline-charged lust for life, their chemistry becomes electrifying.

By reining in the special effects, Brit writer/director Gareth Edwards concentrates the action on his protagonists, intensifying the tension and impact of their experiences. In fact, the majority of the plot's nastiness occurs off-camera, while actual alien appearances are minimised to give more power to the climactic reveal. It's this subtle, rather than shocking, approach that makes *Monsters* such a magnificent and thrilling debut.

Billy Chainsaw

Her fetish outfit lacked imagination

FILM OF THE MONTH BIZARRE

A suprisingly heart-warming romance flick set in a world of freaky alien folk ★★★★

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"Everyone's dead? Oh, all right, I'll sleep with you"

Q+A Gareth Edwards *Co-writer/director*

Gareth Edwards: Fantasising about crash-landings

How did you come up with the design for the aliens?

I based them on deep-sea creatures. It took me a year to come up with a design I liked, sketching in between editing and filming. I think it's best to start with real creatures, then literally 'evolve' them on the computer by pushing and pulling limbs until you come up with something that looks different, but grounded in reality.

What are your five favourite monster movies?

- ***Forbidden Planet* (1956)** OK, so it's not technically a monster movie, but it has a giant monster at the end! I have a fantasy about crash-landing on a planet, like they do in the film, and having to live there. Don't we all? Or is that just me?
- ***War Of The Worlds* (1953)** Again, it's not technically a monster movie but, by putting it on this list, I figure I'll be exempt from the ray guns when the invasion happens!
- ***Jurassic Park* (1993)** If it wasn't for this movie, I'd still be locked in a garage with a 8mm camera trying to make my first bad film.
- ***The Thing* (1982)** Another fantasy of mine is getting marooned on an ice station in the middle of the arctic – preferably with a girl though, not a metamorphosing killer alien.
- ***Alien* (1979)** Is the alien really a monster, or just a misunderstood species trying to survive in the same universe as us, which just happens to have acid for blood? Let's nuke it from orbit, just to be on the safe side.

L.A. ZOMBIE

At last, a man whose cock really is a magic wand

Aliens get rickets, too

THIS GAY ZOMBIE FUCK-FEST from controversial director Bruce LaBruce is so extreme, it's already been banned in Australia. It's the follow up to *Otto; Or, Up with Dead People*, and takes the ambiguity of that film to new, psychedelic heights.

A ripped-to-the-max alien zombie inexplicably walks out of the ocean and on to the streets of Los Angeles. But instead of hunting for fresh flesh to munch on, he wanders the fringes of the city, resurrecting people who've recently died, using his monstrous cock. It's gross. Down-and-outs, the victim of a gang murder and members of an orgy who've been gunned down join the ranks of the undead courtesy of the mutant's spunk.

As a sex-fuelled horror, it delivers in spades, but like George Romero's *Dead* franchise, the film also has serious themes swimming beneath the blood and corpses. *L.A. Zombie* is a metaphor for the abominable way that people who live on the edges of society are treated by others, and suggests that they may as well be the walking dead. Don't expect a conventional narrative, though; this film tells the story visually and it's experimental – qualities that create a surreal atmosphere, transforming the nastiness into something sublimely poetic.

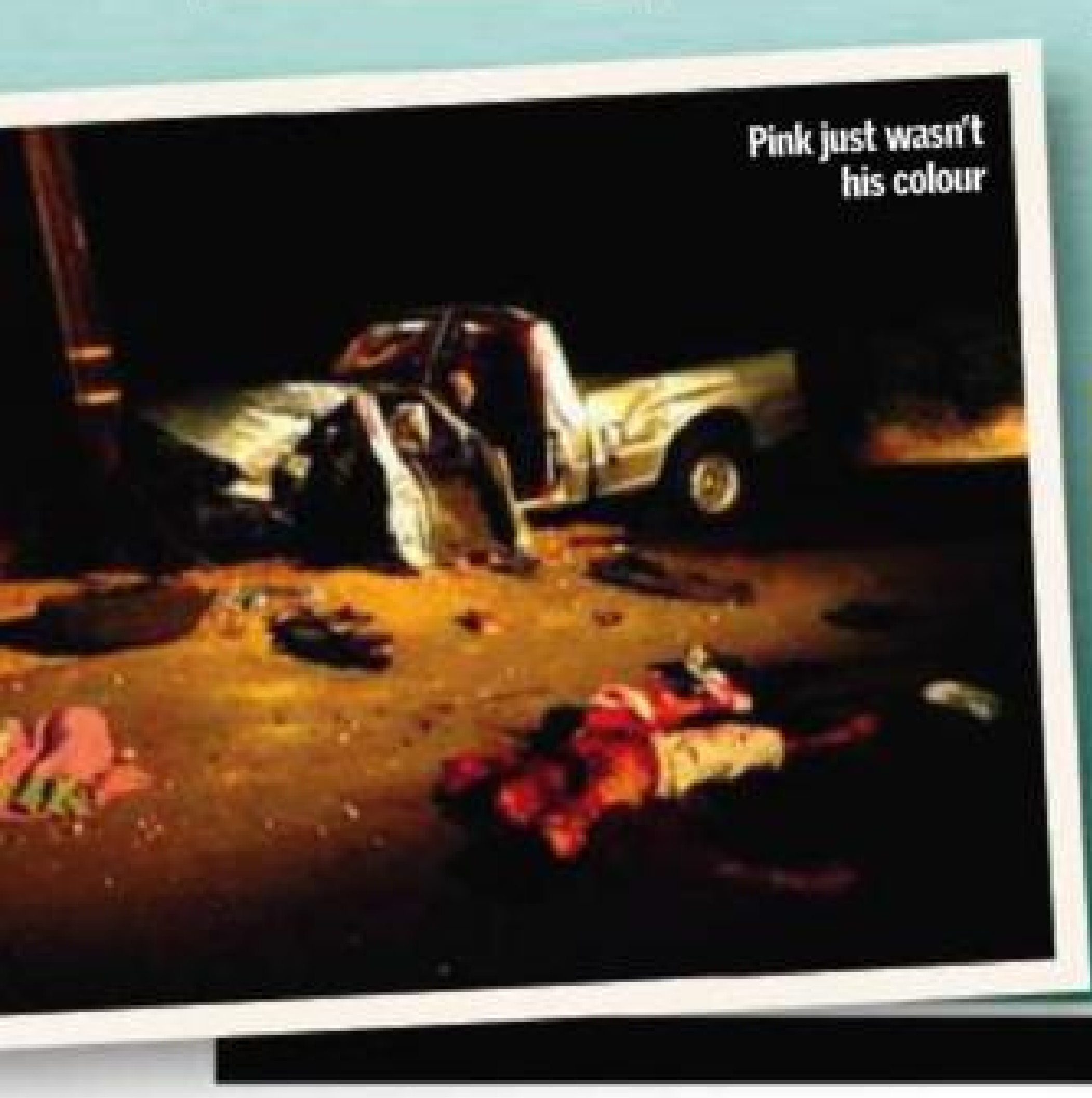
Billy Chainsaw

AS A SEX-FUELLED HORROR, IT DELIVERS IN SPADES

A spunky, back-spackle of a ride that'll hit your gore trigger and make you see red

★★★★

L.A. Zombie is screening at various film festivals. Go to Brucelabruce.com or Lazombie.com for details


Pink just wasn't his colour

The Pogues on tour

WE ARE WHAT WE ARE

In this gritty, Mexican creep-fest, a family of cannibals struggles to survive after the father dies. Avoiding the schlock tactics usually associated with flesh-eater flicks, this film works on atmospheric realism, and the plot unfolds slowly, in dark, dirty colours. Unfortunately, this all goes out the window during the rushed, gore-drenched finale that's so out of synch it's almost funny. **BC** ★ ★ ★

DREAM HOME

When a tenacious, Chinese businesswoman finds her ideal home, she goes berserk with a variety of power tools to secure it in this pleasing flashback to the glory days of 'video nasties'. Creatively shot, this gloriously gratuitous mix of unrelenting splatter, pitch-black humour, and social commentary is a gore-hound's dream. But it might be too convoluted for casual viewers. **BC** ★ ★ ★ ★

RARE EXPORTS: A CHRISTMAS TALE

A group of scientists uncover a dark secret inside a mountain in northern Finland in this adult fairytale with a twist. The crew find mutilated reindeer, and a father and son discover that Christmas will never be the same again. With its black humour and bloody scenes, this film is an interesting take on the Santa Claus legend. **Sean Mowle** ★ ★ ★

LET ME IN

With compelling performances from *Kick-Ass*'s Chloe Moretz and *The Road*'s Kodi Smit-McPhee, this remake of *Let The Right One In* is remarkably loyal to the Swedish original. The story of a loner boy who befriends the vampire girl next door is almost as disturbing and poignant as the 2008 film – though not quite, as it occasionally opts for shock over subtlety, particularly during the bloodsucker scenes. **BC** ★ ★ ★ ★

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TOBE HOOPER

Director of *The Texas Chain Saw Massacre and Poltergeist* talks vegetarianism, hippiedom and why Quentin Tarantino loves his movies

Leatherface gets handy with the power tools

THE BIG INTERVIEW

WORDS **CALUM WADDELL**

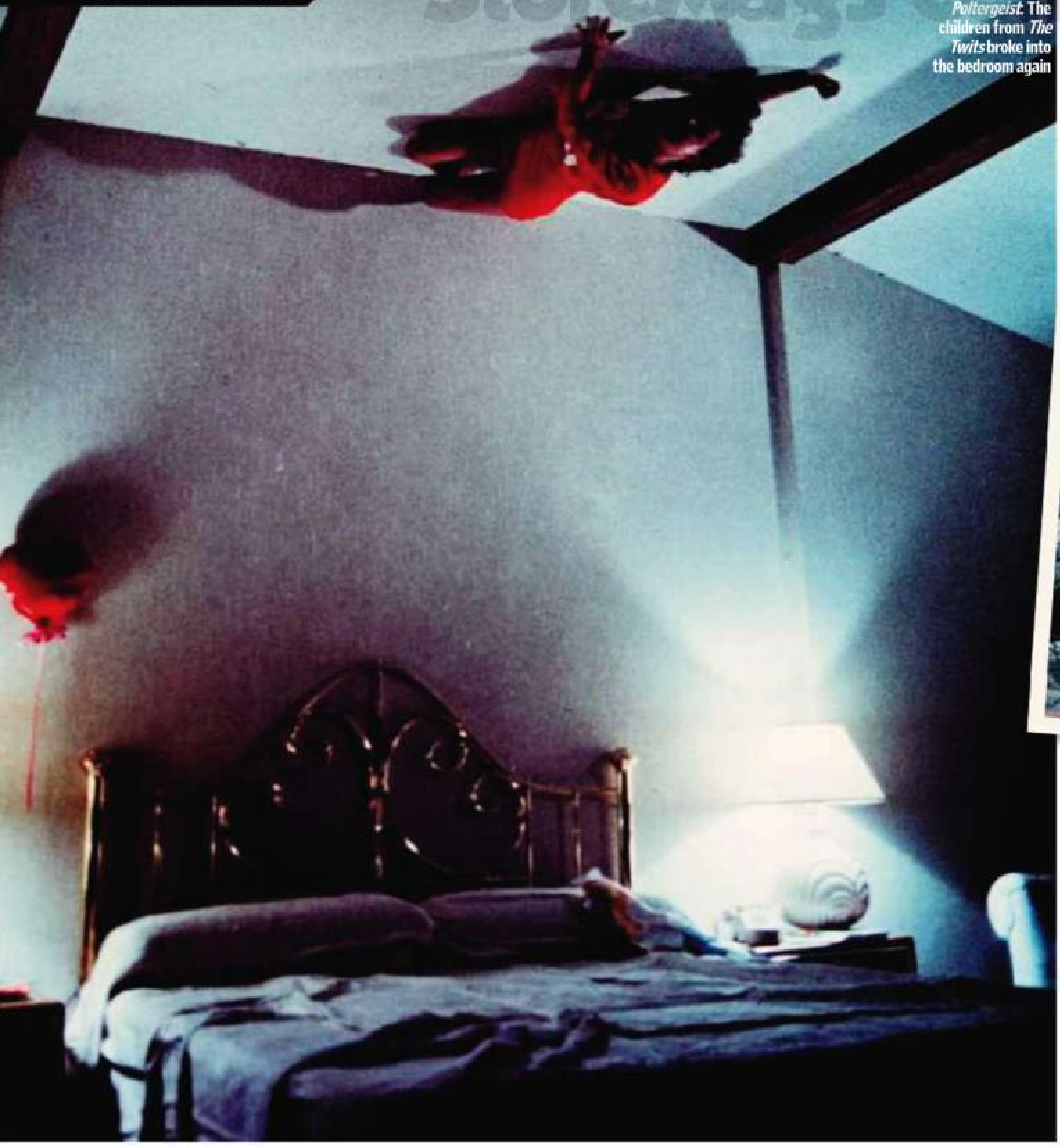
OVER THE PAST 40 YEARS, TOBE HOOPER has made many people shit their pants. His 1974 classic *The Texas Chain Saw Massacre* introduced audiences to the masked psychopath Leatherface, and his subsequent shockers, such as *Salem's Lot* (1979), *The Funhouse* (1981), *Poltergeist* (1982), *Lifeforce* (1985) and *The Toolbox Murders* (2004), proved his dedication to disturbing horror hounds across the globe. With his first feature, *Eggshells* (1969), finally making it to DVD, *Bizarre* talked gore and gravy with the director...

People think of you as the Godfather Of Gore, but *The Texas Chain Saw Massacre* didn't have much blood in it. Does the label annoy you?
Well, you're right. There's only about half an ounce of blood in that film. I didn't care about seeing a lot of mutilated bodies, I just wanted to scare people. Around the time I was making *The Funhouse* I began hearing the terms 'slasher film' and 'splatter movie', and people would always mention *The Texas Chain Saw Massacre*. I think that's partly why I decided to make *The Texas Chain Saw Massacre 2* so incredibly gory. It was my way of saying, "Hey, this is what you thought you saw in the first film. How much can you really handle?"

Did anyone from Texas ever complain that you'd given the state a bad name?
Funnily enough, no-one did, even though when the film came out everyone thought the story was true. It says at the beginning of the movie that it all really happened and the Texas highway department got thousands of enquiries from concerned citizens when it was released. Some people believe anything a film tells them.

Should we be scared of the Deep South?
According to *Deliverance* and *The Texas Chain Saw Massacre* we should! But downtown Los Angeles is scary. The homelessness problem is so horrible that there's cannibalism. It's happening right now and people don't realise it.

The characters in *The Texas Chain Saw Massacre* are killed like cattle in a slaughterhouse. Is the film vegetarian propaganda?
I gave up meat while making that film. In a way I thought the heart of the film was about meat; it's about the chain of life and killing sentient beings, and it has cannibalism in it, although you have to come to that conclusion by yourself because it's only implied. Guillermo Del Toro also gave up eating meat after seeing that movie. →



Poltergeist: The children from *The Twits* broke into the bedroom again

Going green on *Salem's Lot*

Tobe and the cursed crew filming *Poltergeist*

Feeling clucky under *Eggshells*

What did you think of the 2003 *Texas Chain Saw Massacre* remake?

It didn't have the context of the times but it was effective in its own way – in particular the scene where the group of friends approach the house and all you see is Jessica Biel's ass. I loved that.

What's the scariest experience you've had while making a film?

On *Eaten Alive*, in 1977, I was working with an elderly actor called Neville Brand – a highly decorated man who fought during World War II and had killed people. He was pretty violent. I'd say, "Action! Break the door down and chase the girl with a knife, Neville!" and then all hell would break loose because he wasn't acting. Then we almost killed Neville when the effects guy poured fake blood with an iodine base over him, which basically poisoned the poor guy. And when I made a movie called *Crocodile* in Mexico in 2000, a scorpion fell out of a tree and bit our director of photography. He was paralysed for a while after that.

Speaking of injuries, is it true that the crew on *Poltergeist* were cursed?

Oh yeah – about half the crew got injured. Legs, ankles and arms were broken in accidents, and when one of our child actors, Oliver Robins, thought he had chickenpox, he and his mother got into a terrible accident on their way back from the doctor. It turned out it wasn't chicken pox – there were fleas in the soundstage. Halfway through shooting I got a muscle spasm that pulled the ligaments away from the bone in my leg and I had to walk with a cane for the rest of the movie. Lots of weird things happened and it made me back off from directing movies with occult subject matter for a while.

***Eaten Alive*, *The Funhouse* and *The Texas Chain Saw Massacre* were banned in the UK as 'video nasties'...**

At the time I only knew about *Texas*. But three banned films isn't bad, huh? I know there was a thriving black market for *Chain Saw* in the UK for decades, which kind of upsets me because I didn't get the royalties from the sales.

You spent $24m (£15m) on *Lifeforce*, the 1984 film in which a naked girl with massive breasts, from outer space, blows up London. Was it career suicide?

"I GAVE UP EATING MEAT WHILE I WAS MAKING *THE TEXAS CHAIN SAW MASSACRE*"

It was more like career murder. But I'm really proud of *Lifeforce* because no-one will ever be brave enough to do a movie like that again. Even now, people watch that film – with its massive budget – and think "what the hell?" But I knew that in time it'd be considered cool. Quentin Tarantino told me he went to see it many times when it first came out. It's one of his favourites. I'm kinda happy he understood how cool it was, even back then.

What was the inspiration for your first flick, *Eggshells*?

It's a psychedelic film set in a commune during the time of the Vietnam War, but it isn't like other movies that try to explore hippiedom. When I made it the war was ever-present and I was hoping my number wouldn't come up on the draft card. I filmed it wearing sandals and with long, hippy hair.

Finally, is there a great horror movie that you never made?

Yeah, one about Winnie Ruth Judd, who was part of The Trunk Murders in the 1930s. Winnie surgically cut up the bodies of two women and put the remains in a trunk, which she pushed into a river. When she got found out, she was sent to a mental asylum for most of her life – although she kept escaping. But right up until she died she insisted she was innocent of murder – that she'd killed in self defence. I had a script called *Bleeding Hearts*, which could've been a movie of the whole case, but it never happened. Winnie had a tragic life and I would've loved to have made that film.

Eggshells is out on DVD in January

She's pretty dead-looking for a *Lifeforce*, but she's got nice tits, so...

PICTURES: CROBIS, KOBAL, MOVIESTORE COLLECTION

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THE LOVED ONES

All because the lady didn't get a Kit-Kat

DVD OF THE MONTH BIZARRE

XAVIER SAMUEL
THE LOVED ONES

THIS HARSH, YET funny portrait of a dysfunctional family is like *Pretty In Pink* spliced with *The Texas Chain Saw Massacre*.

When a moody teen – still reeling from his dad's sudden death – turns down an invitation to the school dance, he gets unceremoniously whisked off to the house where his spurned date lives, to be tortured.

While the premise is unoriginal, this film pays attention to detail and it feels like a breath of fresh air. The plot begins like a coming-of-age drama, but first-time writer/director Sean Byrne quickly turns it into a relentless, creepy nightmare filled with psychotic blood lust.

Most of the film is set in one room and it's claustrophobic, especially as most of the colours on the set are garish and jarring. But it's the jilted teen's deranged use of kitchen utensils and DIY tools that's most hardcore, and you'll end up watching her toast the boy who rejected her through your fingers.

Robin McLeavy (*48 Shades*) and Xavier Samuel (*Eclipse*) are convincing as the female psycho and her suffering victim. Their strong performances create a good balance of gore and plot, and it looks as though McLeavy relishes the opportunity to act unhinged, making the script's pitch-black humour even funnier.

This is such a full-on horror freak-out, that it's destined for 'midnight movie' cult status – up there with Peter Jackson's *Braindead* and Sam Raimi's *Evil Dead* franchise.

Billy Chainsaw

IT'S A FULL-ON HORROR FREAKOUT DESTINED FOR CULT STATUS

Molly Ringwald with vagina dentata wouldn't be as scary as this ★★★★

Ripping off Dahmer

Using a serial driller

Director of *The Loved Ones*, Sean Byrne, says that he can't take credit for thinking up the skull-drilling sequence in the film. He based it on one of US serial killer Jeffrey Dahmer's grisly acts, in which he used the power tool to penetrate his victims' frontal lobe.

Dahmer had a complex about his height
MILWAUKEE COUNTY
SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT

"Makeshift nipple tassels. Hmm..."

30 DAYS OF NIGHT: DARK DAYS

If gung-ho flicks such as *Resident Evil* float your boat, you'll go overboard for this bloodsucker shoot 'em up sequel. A year after the carnage in *30 Days Of Night*, the sole survivor has relocated to LA where she joins forces with other 'victims' to slay the vampire queen responsible. Although this film isn't scary, its fast pace and throat-ripping gore is thrilling. **BC** ★★★

THE STORY OF FUCK

Despite sounding like a porno, this is a Brit comedy about the music industry. When a loudmouthed A&R man steals an act from a timid colleague, a spunky work experience girl steps in to give him his comeuppance, which involves a band called Fuck. The cartoonish sets keep things kooky, but the film feels too long due to its surreal-but-slow script. Like a porno, the outcome is predictable – but at least it's cute. **EG** ★★★

ZOMBIES OF MASS DESTRUCTION

Against the backdrop of a zombie invasion, this film takes an outrageous, tongue-in-cheek look at contemporary US society. Gays, Muslims, bible-bashers, rednecks and disabled people are all meat for the undead in a schlocky horror show that's self-consciously clichéd, hilariously gory and sick. It's nice to see that zombies aren't discriminatory. **DMcC** ★★★

LAST NIGHT

This offbeat, sci-fi flick follows a bunch of disparate individuals struggling to decide how to spend the last six hours of their lives as the end of the world approaches. Focusing on the emotional impact rather than special effects, the plot veers between black humour and intense drama as the characters party, pray and contemplate suicide. This film tells an absorbing, intriguing, dystopian tale. **BC** ★★★

"I not saying I'd like to build a summer home here, but the trees are actually quite lovely"

BLACK DEATH

Flea-ridden rats and a ratty-faced fiend

THIS VIOLENT medieval thriller is bleak. It's 1348 and the bubonic plague is rapidly decimating England's population.

Led by a self-proclaimed "murderer for God", played by Sean Bean, a bunch of misfit mercenaries and a young monk (Eddie Redmayne from *The Other Boleyn Girl*) infiltrate a village they believe has only remained 'clean' because its inhabitants worship the devil. The tooled-up posse is soon proved right, hurling them into a maelstrom of necromancy and torture.

Director Chris Smith, who also made *Triangle*, tends to focus on the dark side of humanity, and this flick is no exception. He captures the cruelty inflicted on people in the name of God during this period with bleak intensity, and *Black Death* is like a contemporary action version of the 1968 horror film *Witchfinder General* – it's full of authentic slug-fests, dismemberment and pagan weirdness.

But amidst the chaos and carnage, Smith uses the film's conflict between believers and non-believers to examine how violence was, and still is, used to enforce religious piety.

However, the thought-provoking side of this film isn't overbearing and it'll appeal to both gorehounds and cerebral horror-lovers. **Billy Chainsaw**

A well-raised boil with plenty of pus and blood ★★★

Swamp things!

Q+A Chris Smith *Director*

What films inspired *Black Death*?
I wanted to create chaos – a sense that the world is in total turmoil, like in Werner Herzog's 1972 film *Aguirre: The Wrath of God.*

You've always written your own films, so what did you like about Dario Poloni's script?
I was drawn to the tone and the mood of the writing. The world he created felt authentic. *Black Death* was written as a supernatural film in the original script, but then we started to include ideas about what evil would be like in the real world. As we were working on it, we became focused on faith and religion, and the clash between the two religions in the film.

WEST SIDE, MOTHERFUCKER!
HOW AWFULLY GHETTO!

***Black Death* is still dark and supernatural. Have you ever had a paranormal experience?**
Once, when I was having a driving lesson, there was a black car parked in a cul-de-sac. We pulled in so that there was no way the car could get out, but by the time I'd done a three point turn, I looked in the rear-view mirror and it had gone. That was the only time anything like that has happened to me, but I do believe in the supernatural – even though I believe in science more.

WORDS: DEN OF GEEK

THE MOVIE MOLE

Digging up the best film gossip

Ahhhh, matching perms are so cute

Excellent Bogies, fellas

Mole detects Kryptonite in the air as rumours about the next **Superman** movie begin to circulate. Zack Snyder (*300*) is directing it, but could *Mad Men* star Jon Hamm be pulling on the blue tights? Mole says not. Will Supergirl be in it? That's just wild fantasy on your part. Tut tut.

Meanwhile, Mole has been sniffing out trouble on the proposed set of **The Hobbit**. Peter Jackson was set to direct the films, and Martin Freeman was rumoured to have accepted the role of Bilbo Baggins, so it seemed as though the movies were moving full steam ahead. Until, that is, unions urged their members to body-swerve the film. Jackson has threatened to move production to Europe instead. Expect a fight.

Another franchise that may be exhumed is **Bill & Ted**. Keanu Reeves has confirmed that he and Alex Winter are interested in a third film, and Mole has discovered that there'll be none of this 'reboot' or 'passing the mantle' nonsense this time – just older Bill & Ted, partying less than before, Mole would wager.

And another new movie has been added to the Marvel product slate. This time it's going to feature Scarlett Johansson as **Black Widow**, the character she first played in *Iron Man 2*. Mole has no idea when the film will happen – Scarlett's got to star in *The Avengers* first – but Mole is thinking about volunteering to work in the wardrobe department. It's a tough job, but someone's got to do it.

Finally, Bruce Campbell clearly went to see *The Expendables* over the summer. Mole has sniffed out news that the actor's planned sequel to **My Name Is Bruce** will feature a who's who of horror actors. At least that's if they return Campbell's calls, which they damn well should. Just saying...

DEN OF GEEK!

The square-eyed experts at Denofgeek.com look at the rest of this month's DVD releases

4321: The girls failed to stand in order of hotness

Muddled is the most polite way to describe **Iron Man 2** (★★★). While this film has a spectacular Grand Prix action sequence, and Robert Downey Jr's on top form, it gets bogged down by involving too many characters and having an overly-convoluted plot. When it's good, it's great, but it tries to please too many people.

You can't accuse David Fincher's **Se7en** (★★★★★) of trying to do that. It's a ferocious, intelligent, gripping thriller, and its Blu-ray debut is welcome. Even though *Se7en* was made 15 years ago, it still sticks in your head, and Morgan Freeman's performance as the detective is his finest to date.

4.3.2.1 (★★★) is arguably a career best for writer/director Noel Clarke, too. It's got action, four parallel stories, a little bit of how's-yer-father, and the kind of tight script that British movies often lack. On the downside, it's too ambitious, and too long. But it still marks Clarke as a talent to watch.

Meanwhile, there are moments in **Frozen** (★★★), where everything gels. It's a single-location horror about three skiers stuck on a lift in the middle of a cold night. The film plays effectively on its eerie premise when the plot is slow and quiet, but by the time the end credits roll, it's long since exhausted its box of tricks, and just about crawls over the finish line.

Se7en: Brad hoped there was hair gel in the box

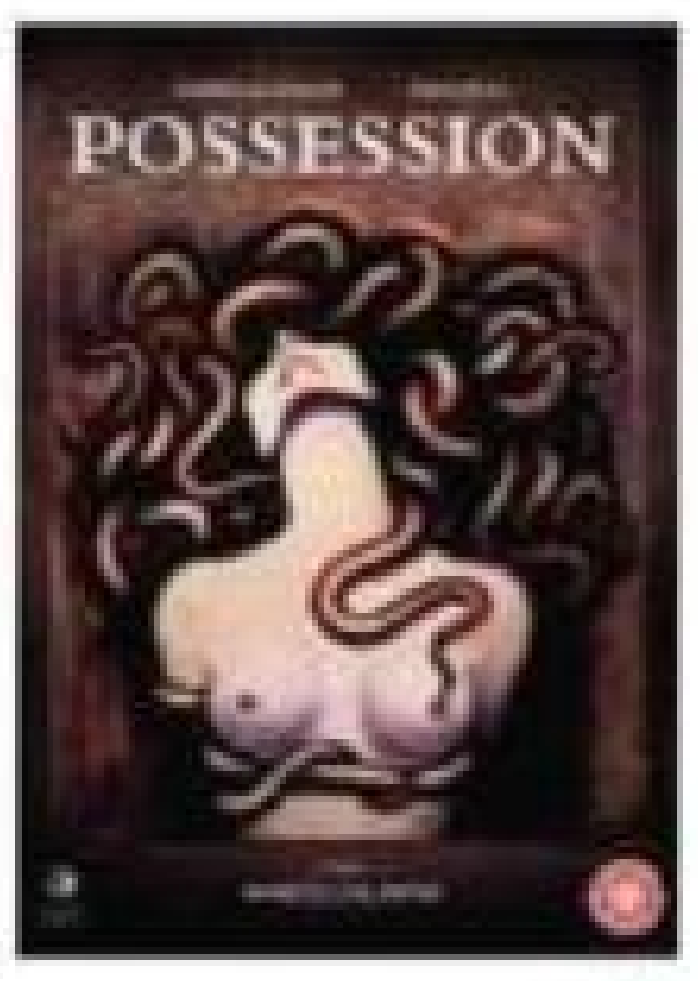
There's an IT geek in every Iron Man

Finally, from the world of TV, season one of ABC's big budget take on **V** (★★★) is out as a boxset. Its got a cracking opening episode, great effects, and Morena Baccarin gives a terrific performance as Anna, but getting through the middle of the season is hard work. Thankfully, it perks up for an impressive finale.

To find out what's going on in TV and movieland, and for plenty of nerdy ranting, go to Denofgeek.com

POSSESSION

If you think boiling a bunny's fucked-up...



THIS VIDEO NASTY was banned in the UK when it came out in 1981. In cold war Berlin, a young couple's marriage goes into meltdown after the wife admits to having an affair. But the weird shit hits the fan when it becomes apparent that her adulterous liaisons involve something that's not human.

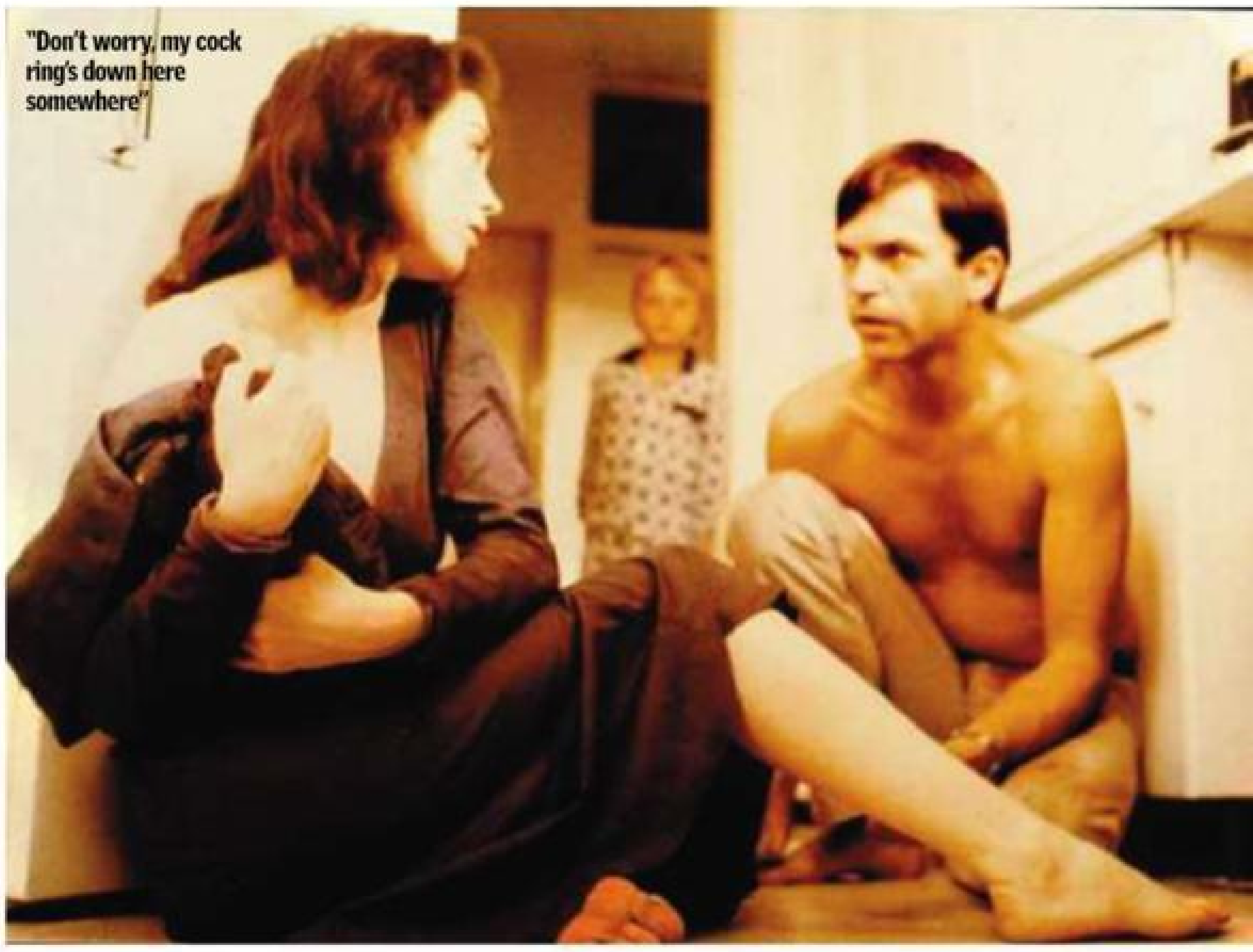
Euro-arthouse actress Isabelle Adjani from *Queen Margot*, and Sam Neill from *Jurassic Park*, deliver the most over-the-top performances of their careers – playing characters embroiled in a waltz of psychosexual madness who smack each other senseless, and harm themselves with an electric carving knife.

The offbeat camerawork in this film swings between out-of-control wildness and creepy voyeurism, enhancing the icy, foreboding atmosphere, and mirroring the pair's escalating dementia. The emotional and physical violence is so intense, squeamish folk may find it disgusting, especially when the creature appears and the wife starts trying to kill people to protect her secret.

Possession is hard going and occasionally becomes bogged down in writer/director Andrzej Zulawski's head-spinning philosophy on collapsing relationships. But thankfully, his views don't dilute the film's power, and *Possession* is so weird and disorienting that it'll burrow under your skin from the beginning and keep you hooked until its apocalyptic climax.

Billy Chainsaw

A terror tour of the relationship between a toxic harpy and her hubby. It'll possess you
★★★



"Don't worry, my cock ring's down here somewhere"

THE AVENGERS SERIES 5

This classic spy-fi TV series was eye-poppingly psychedelic in the 1960s, but this digital clean-up has made it retina-frying. Diana Rigg's catsuits shine brighter, Patrick Macnee's smile is sparklier and the whole series is just... groovier. Extras include a demented, much-bleeped commentary from leering roué Peter Wyngarde who guest stars in an episode called *Epic*. **KH** ★★★★★

HIGANJIMA: ESCAPE FROM VAMPIRE ISLAND

In this Japanese action adventure, a teenager's search for his missing brother leads him to a mysterious island populated by ravenous vampires. Bursting with unrestrained energy and gory effects, this film is like *Battle Royale* with fangs. But there's too much talking in it, which slows the pace. **BC** ★★★

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MONSTER MAGNET

Too heavy to put on the fridge

MASTERMIND

EIGHT STUDIO albums in and *still* no-one can accuse stoner rock juggernauts Monster Magnet of running on fumes.

Mastermind finds the New Jersey group reinvigorated and playing as loud as ever. The whipcrack sharp riff of 'Perish In Fire' is suitably monstrous, while 'Dig That Hole' is classic, sludgy swamp rock. The largely mid-tempo grooves can make things drag occasionally, but this album is big and clever – a heavy beast with an addictive pull. **Ciaran McCauley**

Hellishly loud stoner rock
★★★

Q+A Dave Wyndorf *Singer*

A withering look to shrink your cojones

How does the new record *Mastermind* stack up to previous Monster Magnet albums?
I think it's our beefiest album yet. I wanted to make an intense-sounding record you can turn up loud without frying your ears. The music sounds muscular because I spent more time focusing on the bass and rhythm, and it breathes more than most of our other albums. Recording it was great – it was written in a month and recorded in six days. But of course, when I went to add lyrics to the tracks, the record got fucked up.

What happened?
I moved to LA thinking I'd write the lyrics, record them and master the record out there. I thought I'd be done in two weeks, but the lyrics didn't come. I was staying in a cheap-ass, horrible hotel and I filled my room with books, comics and albums, and had constantly had noise blaring from the TV. I was loading my brain with all this input but nothing was coming out. Then after two weeks, the words finally started coming, but it was through the vernacular of the TV news and noise that I'd bombarded myself with. It was all: "Bleugh bleugh, the fucking planes are falling from the sky, bleugh bleugh!"

You overdosed on prescription pills while on tour in 2006, and you blamed your drug problems on being on the road too much. How do you feel about touring now?
Everything changed when I figured out how to get a decent night's sleep while on tour. That was my problem – I couldn't sleep. And when you can't sleep, you can't sing, and then there's no show, and everybody gets mad. So I've got this new routine, where I'm like a vampire. I sleep during the day, turn up for the show and stay up all night.

How extreme do your tours get?
Once I stage-dived in Holland and a hot girl shoved a wad of acid in my mouth. Five minutes later I was tripping my balls off. It was a nightmare. The best moment of my life, though, was when we played a festival in Germany. There was a storm during our song 'Spine Of God', and just as I was about to scream the line in the song, 'Centre of the universe!' a huge bolt of lightning came out of the sky and there was a massive thunder crack. It was as though I'd planned it. Boom! It was so fucking great.

Mastermind is released on 27 October and Monster Magnet are touring the UK in November. Go to MySpace.com/monstermagnet

Which one's Jesus?

SUNDAY OCTOBER 25TH
EYEHATEGOD
GOATWHORE
A.C.
THE MIDDLE EAST
PSSHH!
SLURP!

Costume had to tape up Seth's mangina

ANAL CUNT

Talking out of their holes

FUCKIN' A

ONCE PUSHING at the bleeding edge of extreme music, noise/grind pioneers Anal Cunt settled into a profane little groove in the 1990s, involving incoherent screeching, indistinct riffing and eighteen-syllable song titles about giving AIDS to orphans, and things like that. They've only just left it. In possibly their first genuinely offensive move in a long time, they've found the perfect way to alienate their diehard fanbase: a mediocre rock'n'roll record.

James Hoare

Piss-flap poor ★★

Q+A Seth Putnam *Singer*

Why did you do these sex photos?
To put them on the new album.

Is there anything in your life that you're not prepared to show people?
No, not a fucking thing.

Did you do your new 'cock rock' record to annoy your fans?
It felt like the right thing to do at the time and, if it annoys Anal Cunt fans, all the better.

Have you ever stopped yourself from doing something stupid?
Not really, no.

When did you cross the line with your offensive behaviour?
I don't know, maybe when I punched a nun in fourth grade. She was a total cunt. It was a long time ago and I can't remember why I did it.

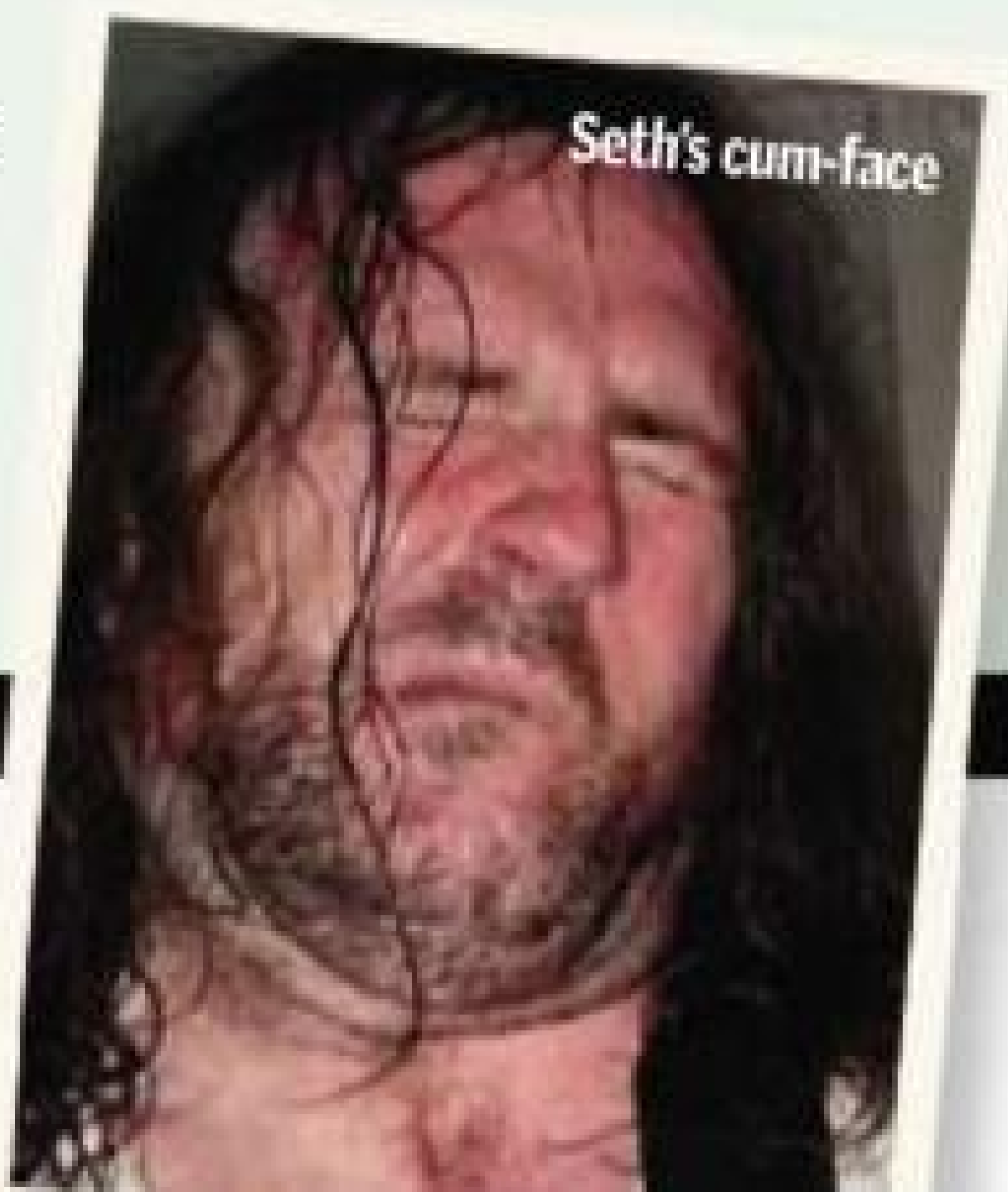
Is it getting harder to offend people?
Yeah, I've done everything I can to offend people. It's hard thinking of things to do.

In 2004 you overdosed and went into a coma. Was that your body's way of telling you to slow down?
The coma was the best thing that's happened to me, for various reasons.

How do you respond to the people who said it was karma?
It probably was.

Do you ever worry that people might pity you?
I don't really care to be honest.

Does it bother you when people try and attribute philosophical meaning to the things that you say and do?
Yeah, people who think they know everything about us are fucking sad, 'cause they don't know about a fucking single thing.



Seth's cum-face

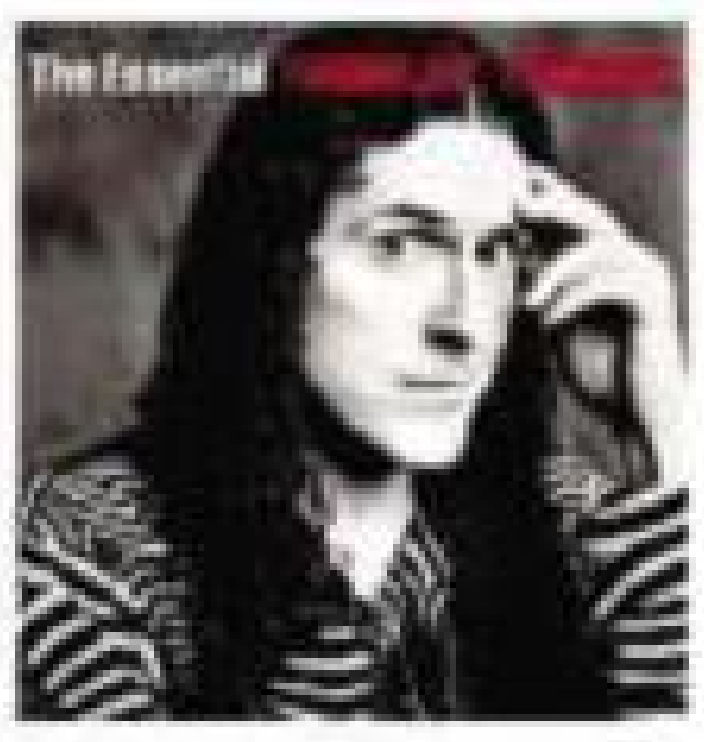
CRADLE OF FILTH

DARKLY, DARKLY, VENUS AVERSA

Cradle's last record, *Godspeed On The Devil's Thunder*, was a concept album about murderous nobleman, Gilles De Rais. This one, about Adam's demonic first wife, Lilith, is like a sequel – revelling in similarly gothic imagery, but with more female vocals. What more could you want from the black-clad fiends? EG ★★★★

WEIRD AL YANKOVIC

THE ESSENTIAL



Corkscrew-curled, accordion-toter Weird Al has been creating loving parodies of popular songs for over 30 years. Here are his pick of the best. Although he can be impenetrably American, and self-consciously wacky, the best, including 'Eat It', and 'Like A Surgeon', are pin-point accurate, and pop inflated rock star egos. KH ★★★

SOLEFALD

NORRØN LIVSKUNST

These Norwegian avant-garde metallers create a mixture of soothing and unsettling sounds, incorporating prog, mad-harpy singing and even the vocal refrain from Little Richard's 'Tutti Frutti'. They mostly sing in Norwegian so it's difficult to tell if anything's lost in translation. But maybe they're just mad. EG ★★★

ROSE KEMP

GOLDEN SHROUD

You've got to love an album that starts with a beautifully harmonised "Fuck!" Rose combines folky vocals with megalithic riffs and unearthly wailing. Although her strained singing style can sound like she's trying to shit an artichoke, she's sublime when she hits her Sabbath-meets-Jefferson Airplane stride. KH ★★★

KORESH

CRIPPLEDRIVER

The well-endowed ponies and vomiting cat on Koresh's artwork give you a sense of their humour – and they like to express it as noisily and sludgily as possible. As the album wears on they settle from a head-fuck into a groove, but the joke soon wears thin. You'll find them at your nearest sweaty pub. EG ★★

Storemags

MUSÉE MÉCANIQUE

The Portland bench saw messiahs

HOLD THIS GHOST

Almost a junkyard orchestra, Portland folksters Musée Mécanique give an uneasy edge to easy listening. Initially, the ten modest tracks on this album seem to feed into one another too seamlessly, but every listen unearths new and intriguing layers of sound. Evoking a warm ambience, this is the soundtrack for a quiet, yet sinister winter evening in. **Irina Buznea**

Cosy layers that wrap around your ears ★★★★

These pirates have missed the boat

Q+A Musée Méchanique

You're known for using unusual instruments. What's the strangest one you've ever played?

Sean (singer and various instruments) It's strange that we still have a guitar! We've played a saw, a typewriter, an ice-cream maker, an old coffee grinder and a little toy keyboard we bought at a garage sale for 75 cents!

Are you a DIY master with a saw or do you struggle to put together an IKEA kit?

Sean No, we're pretty good! Back home in Portland, we've worked building and remodelling homes.

How's life on the road?

Micah (singer and various instruments) Tiring, but amazing. We've been laughing all the time. Today, as we're in London, we went to Abbey Road and did the 'walking across the zebra crossing' photo.

Sean We felt rather stupid while we were posing, but we figured our mums are gonna love it.

What's the weirdest response you've had from a fan?

Micah In Vienna, a guy in the balcony at the gig venue kept demanding a drum solo, yelling that the drummer was the most talented in the band. Afterwards, he came up to him and gave him a hug! I think he just really wanted a hug – a little drummer hug.

Musée Mécanique have been compared to the drone-folk band Neutral Milk Hotel. Who'd win in a fight?

Sean They'd win – they're older and wiser, and they sing rougher and tougher than we do. But then, we do have a saw...

Your album is called *Hold This Ghost*. Have you ever seen or heard a ghost?

Micah I can't deny their existence. I've felt them in my folk's house since I was a kid. My dad was like, "Whatever, you're five years old. You'll get over it." Ten years later, we had to have a new-age exorcism.

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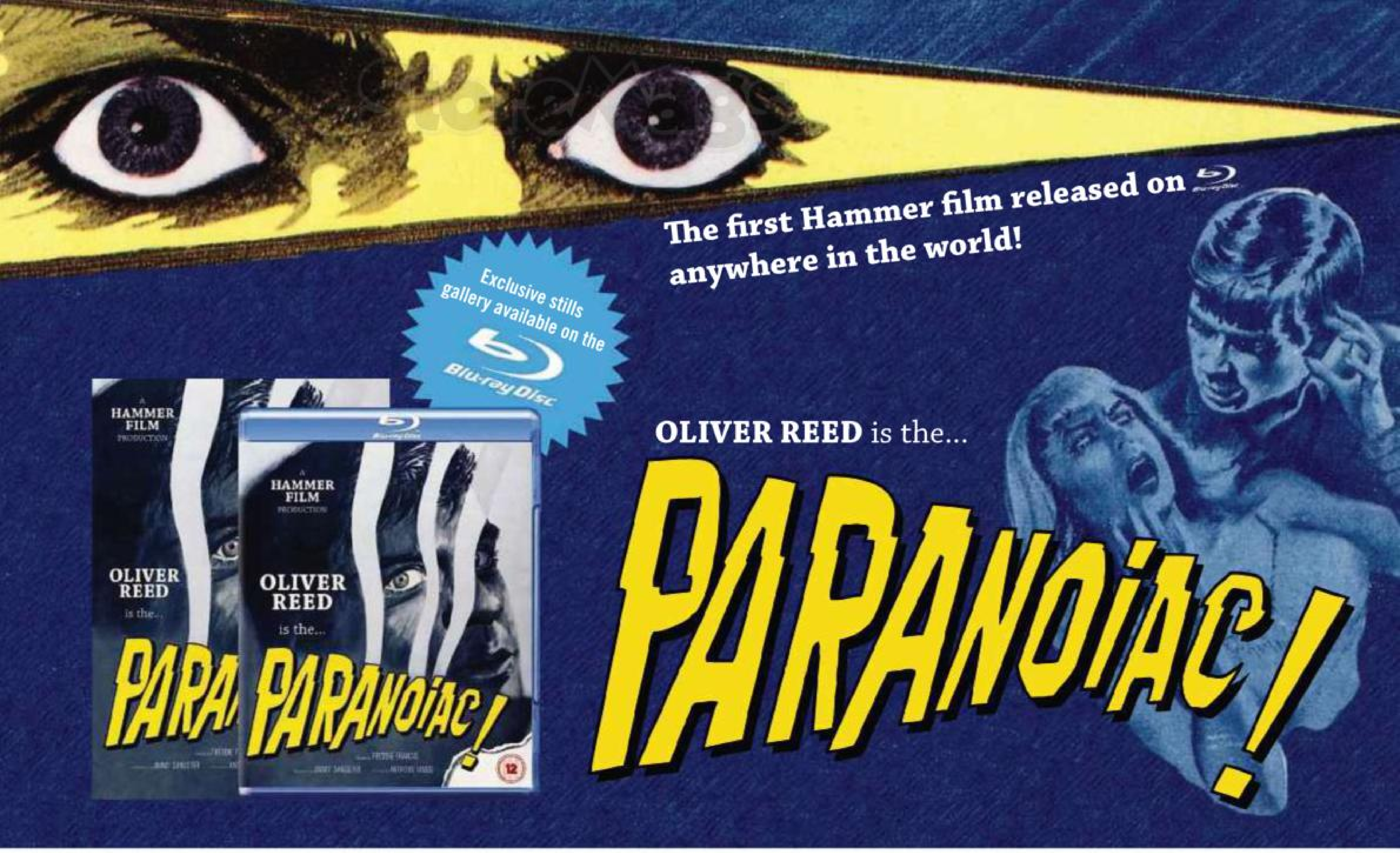
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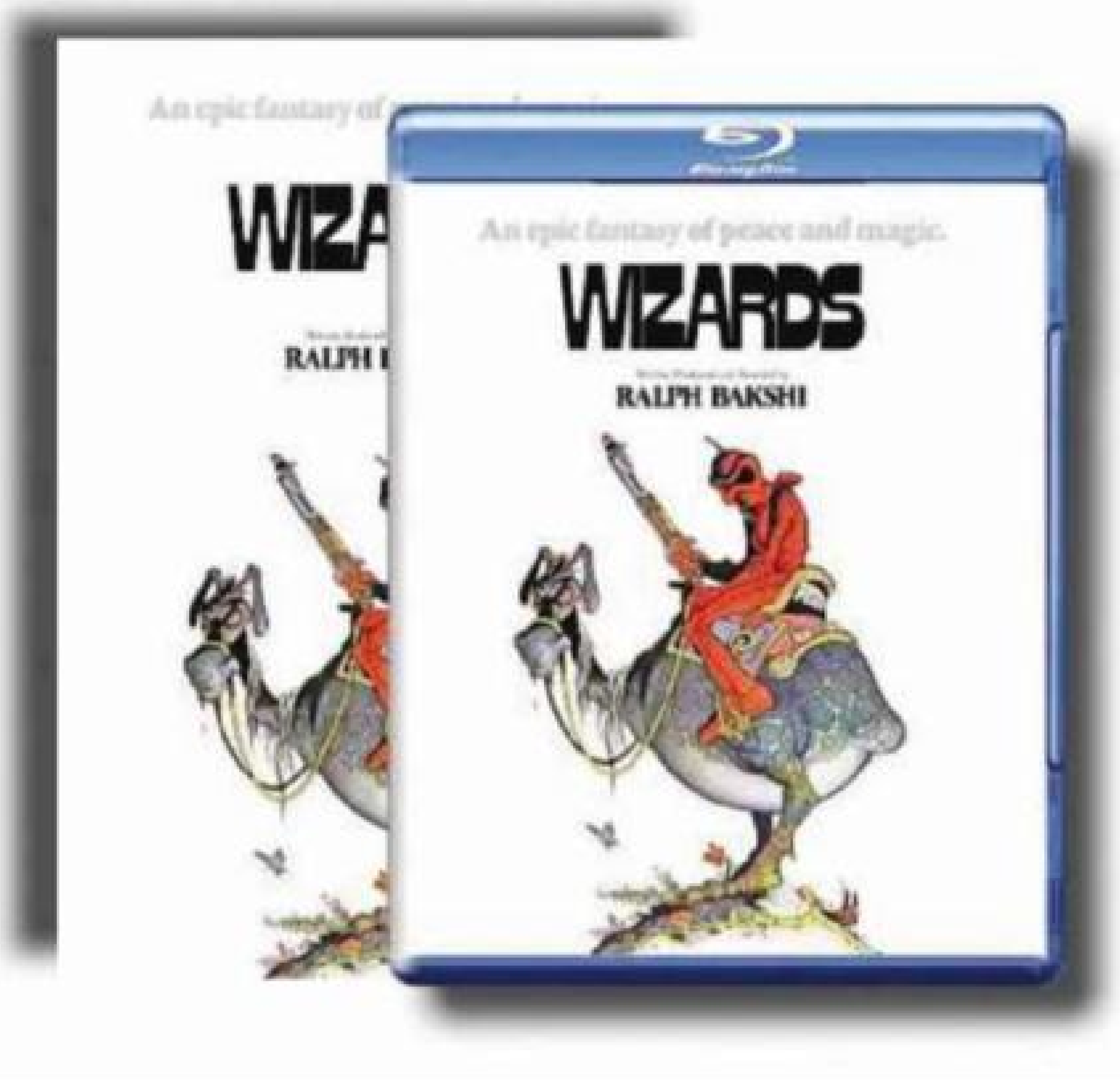
OLIVER REED is the... PARANOIAC!
12

WIZARDS

An epic fantasy of peace and magic

One of the most ambitious and inventive films from legendary animator Ralph Bakshi, Wizards is a dazzling fantasy adventure. Set on a post-apocalyptic Earth where technology has been outlawed after nuclear disaster, the film follows the story of Avatar, the kindly, eccentric sorcerer-ruler of Montagar, a rainbow paradise inhabited by elves and fairies.


An epic fantasy of peace and magic.
WIZARDS
RALPH BAKSHI

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ICONS

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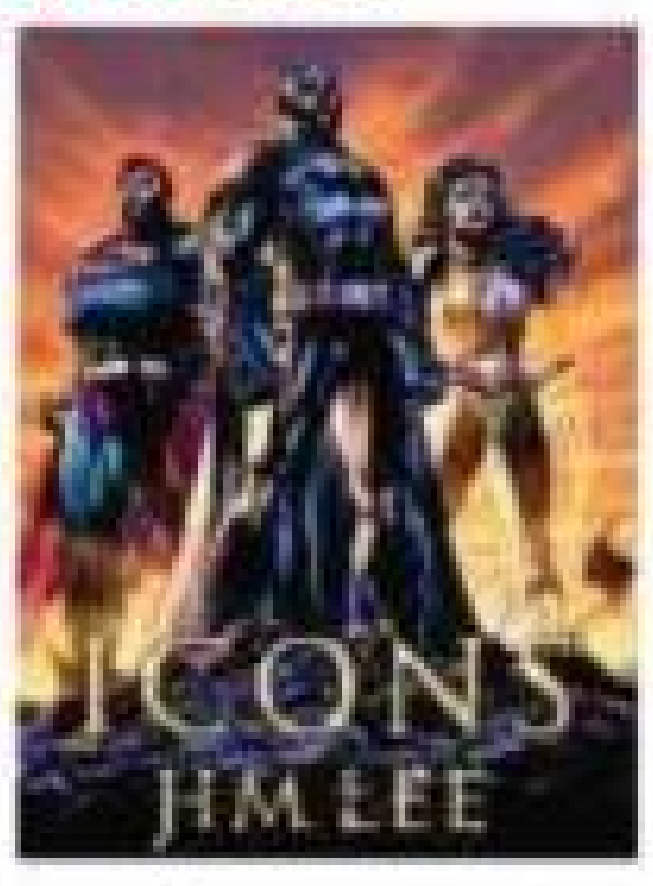
JIM LEE



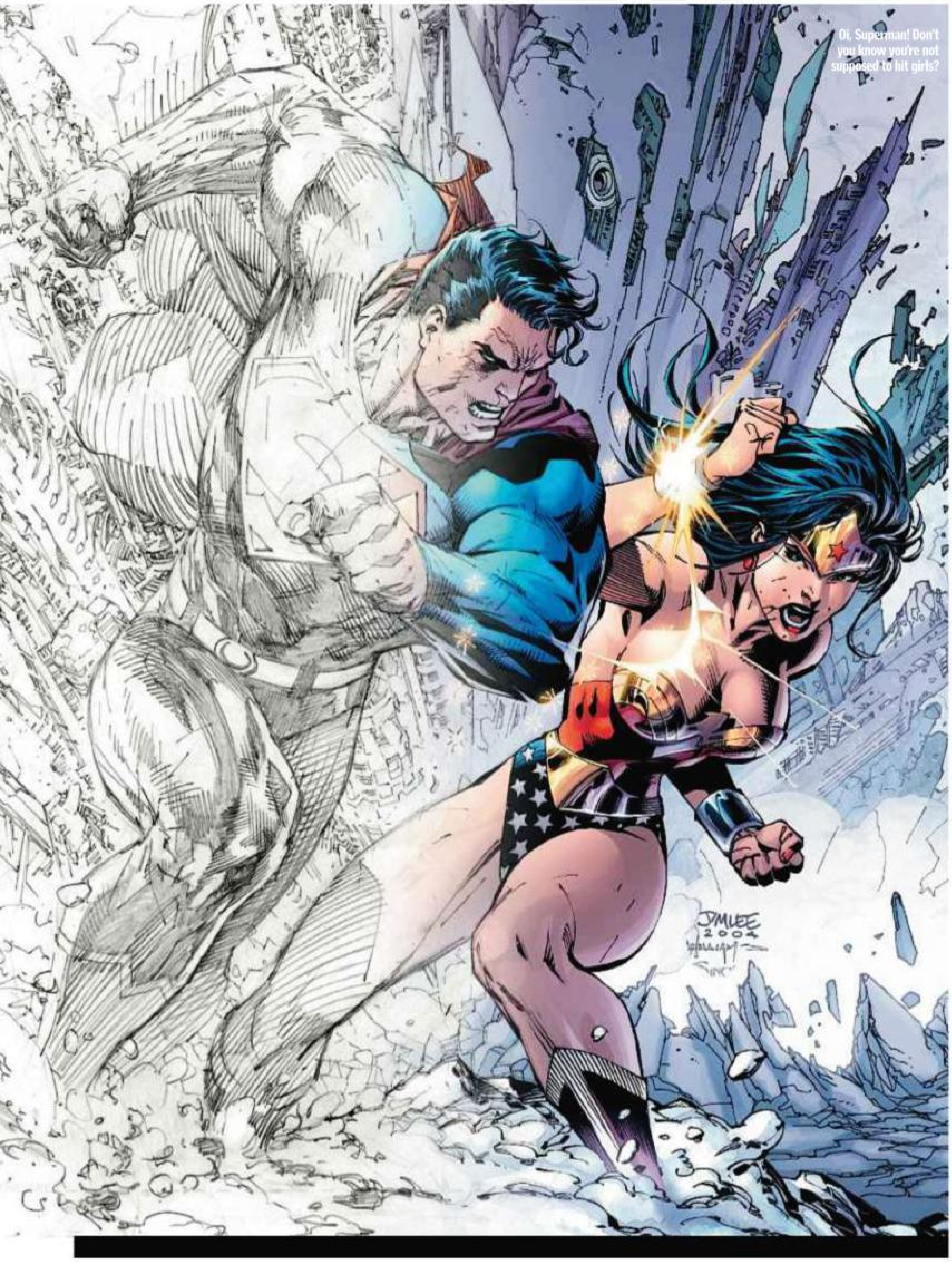
BOOK OF THE MONTH BIZARRE

WHETHER IT'S THE bitter tears of Bruce Wayne standing over his murdered parents, the maniacal grin of Robin hitching a ride on the roof of a subway train, or a glowering Wonder Woman striding through shadowy backstreets as businessmen dive for cover, Jim Lee's drawings are more than simply great comicbook art. Each frame is packed with life, colour and personality, and every laughter line framing The Joker's face or bloody rip in Batman's gauntlets says more than a thousand words.

Icons: The DC Comics And Wildstorm Art Of Jim Lee is a luscious, heavy, hardback collection of Lee's best work, featuring DC's most famous faces, such as Batman, Superman and Wonder Woman, along with a legion of lesser-spotted heroes and villains. Based around an all-new interview with Lee – who's now co-publisher of DC Comics – every page is bursting with full-colour illustrations and pencil sketches that span the artist's 20-year career. It also has a bonus 10-page Legion Of Super-Heroes strip at the back that'll send anyone with a passing interest in comics into a spunky fanboy frenzy.

Beautifully presented, deeply informative and produced with a genuine love for DC heroes big and small, *Icons* is a stunning document of a life in comics, and a book you'll continue to gorge on for months to come.

David McComb ★★★★★



Oi, Superman! Don't you know you're not supposed to hit girls?

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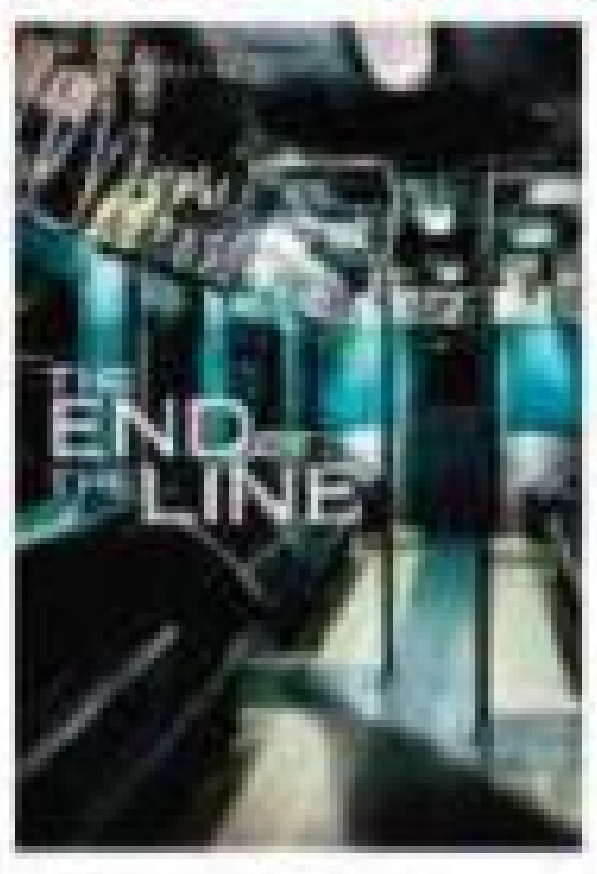
THE END OF THE LINE

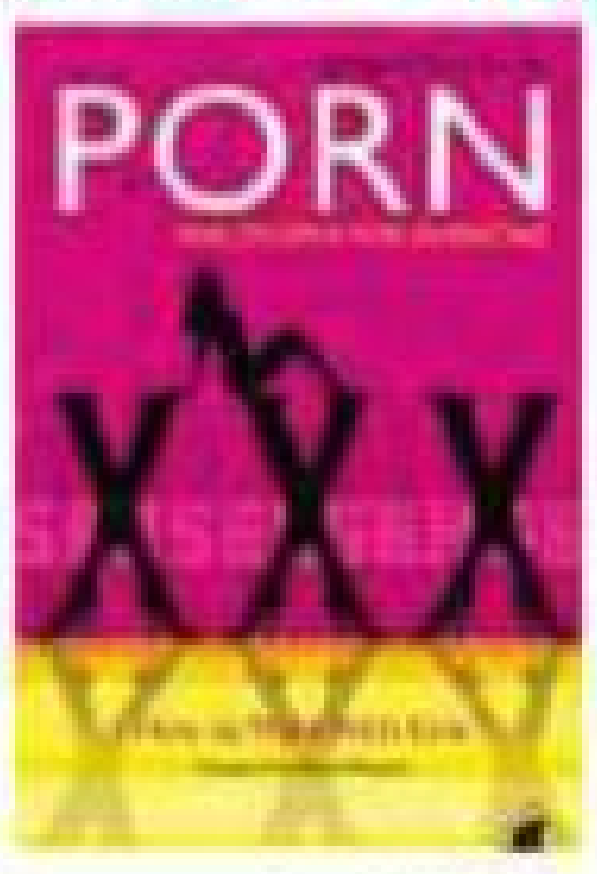
EDITED BY JONATHAN OLIVER



Underground trains and tunnels are scary; claustrophobic, damp, and dark. Add monsters, ghosts and gore into the equation and the terror gets even deeper. This collection of taut horror stories by authors including Ramsey Campbell, Christopher Fowler and Pat Cadigan is set on underground systems worldwide. It's even more creepy than having your nose stuck in another commuter's armpit in rush hour. **KH** ★★★★

PORN: HOW TO THINK WITH KINK

DAVE MONROE



This book in the quasi-academic 'Philosophy For Everyone' series sets out the moral and ethical arguments for and against skin flicks – though it's skewed towards filth-loving. With contributions from porn industry insiders as well as professors, it makes for an interesting, though long, read – if only because you'll be able to justify your viewing habits to your girlfriend/mum when they catch you jerkin' the gherkin. There's also a serial killer book in the series. **EG** ★★★

My favourite book

By Phil Kyle

Old school *London Ink* star

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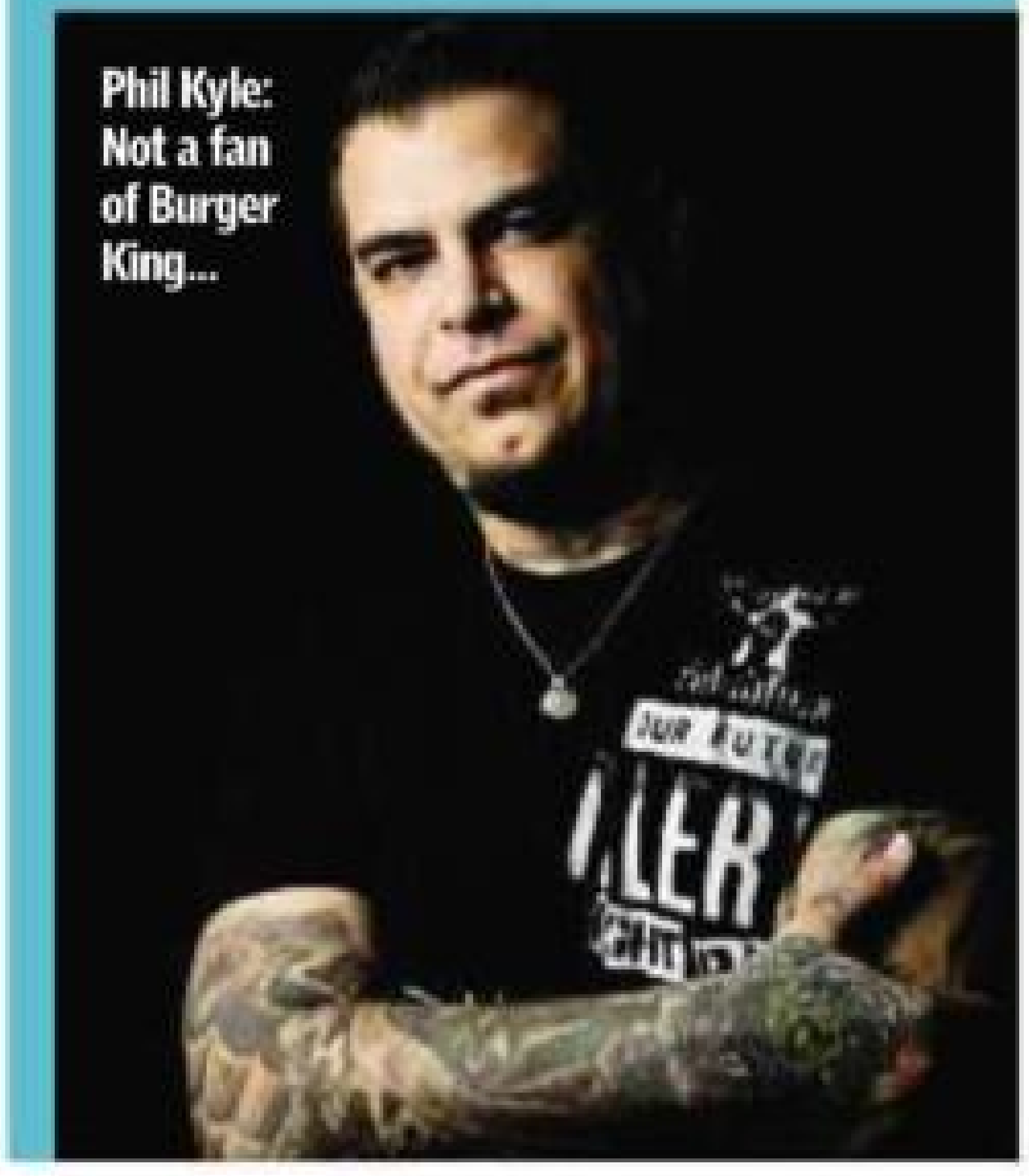

Phil Kyle: Not a fan of Burger King...

Whirlwind romance on the *Ghostbusters* set

CASTLEVANIA: LORDS OF SHADOW

Making it Halloween all year round!

Xbox 360, PS3

A GORE-SOAKED QUEST, CRAWLING with werewolves, vampires, ghosts, goblins and a host of unspeakable things that go bump in the night, *Lords Of Shadow* is the only horror game you'll need this Halloween.

A reboot of the classic console franchise that's been kicking around for almost a quarter of a century, *Castlevania* is a rollicking action adventure where the spring-heeled hero uses daggers, holy water and a chain-whip to battle bosses that tower above him like skyscrapers.

Developed in association with Hideo Kojima – the sour-faced genius behind *Metal Gear Solid* – *Castlevania* allows players to seamlessly link explosive moves into a dervish of outrageous action; slashing monsters on the ground, scooping them into the air with a coiled chain, then hammering them into submission as they crash back towards the earth. So far, so *Devil May Cry*. But with an epic musical score, a moody hero voiced by *Trainspotting*'s Robert Carlyle and a plot read by Sir Patrick Stewart – who, let's face it, could read *Bizarre* aloud and make it sound like Shakespeare – *Lords Of Shadow* feels like a epic work of fantasy fiction. It's a dramatic change of pace for a series that had become tired and predictable.

But while everything looks and sounds incredible, *Castlevania* isn't without its problems. Unlike recent smashes such as *Halo: Reach* and *Super Mario Galaxy 2* – which are gloriously simple to play, yet imperceptibly ramp up the challenge as the story progresses – learning *Castlevania*'s myriad moves is a bewildering and complicated task, and one that only the most hardcore players will have the patience for. And as hammering randomly on the attack keys is a sure-fire way to an early grave, *Castlevania* will only reward the most committed players. It'll frustrate anyone looking for a quick splash of bloodletting.

David McComb

A slick, dramatic monster-masher – but not for the lazy or faint-hearted ★★★★

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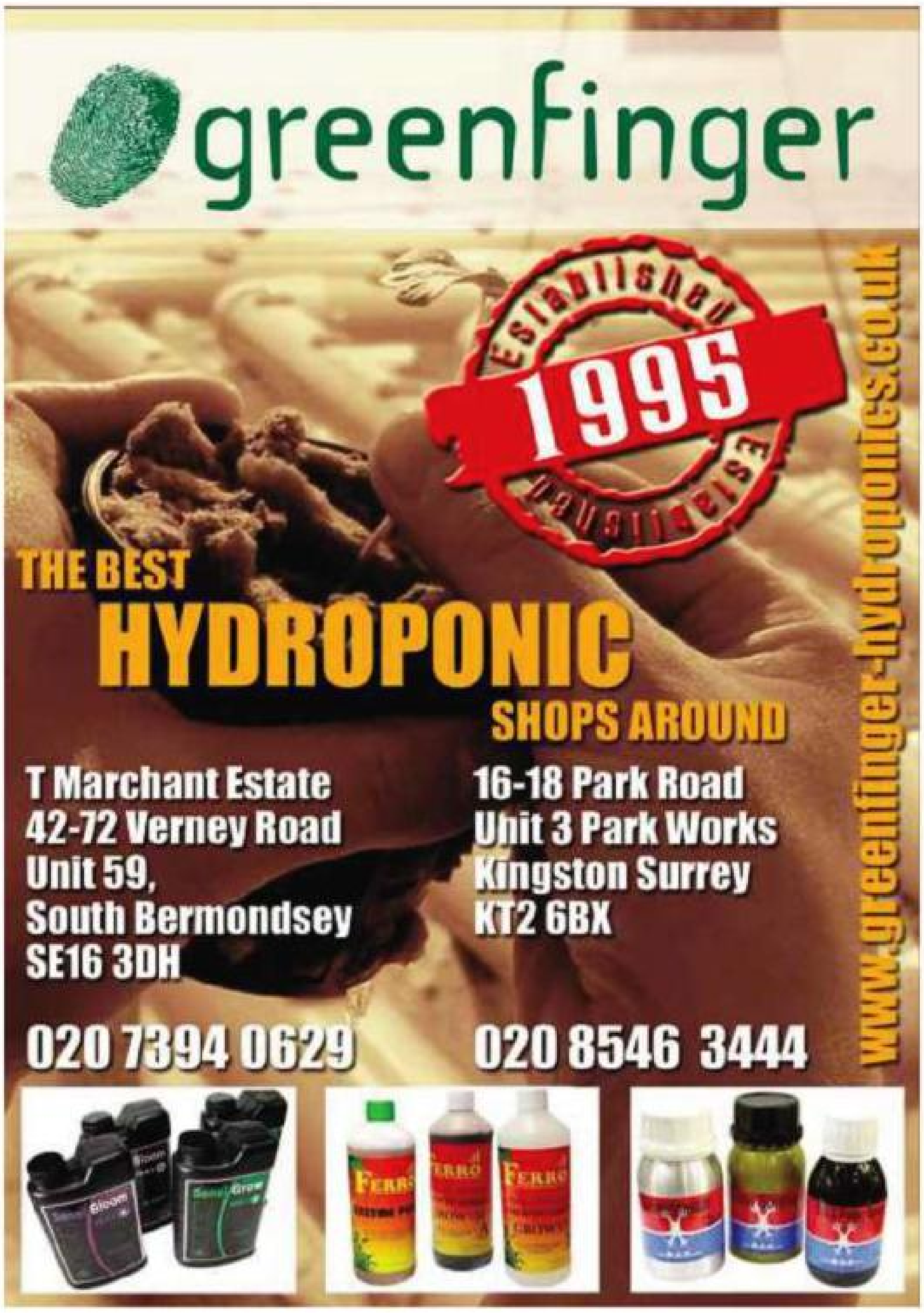
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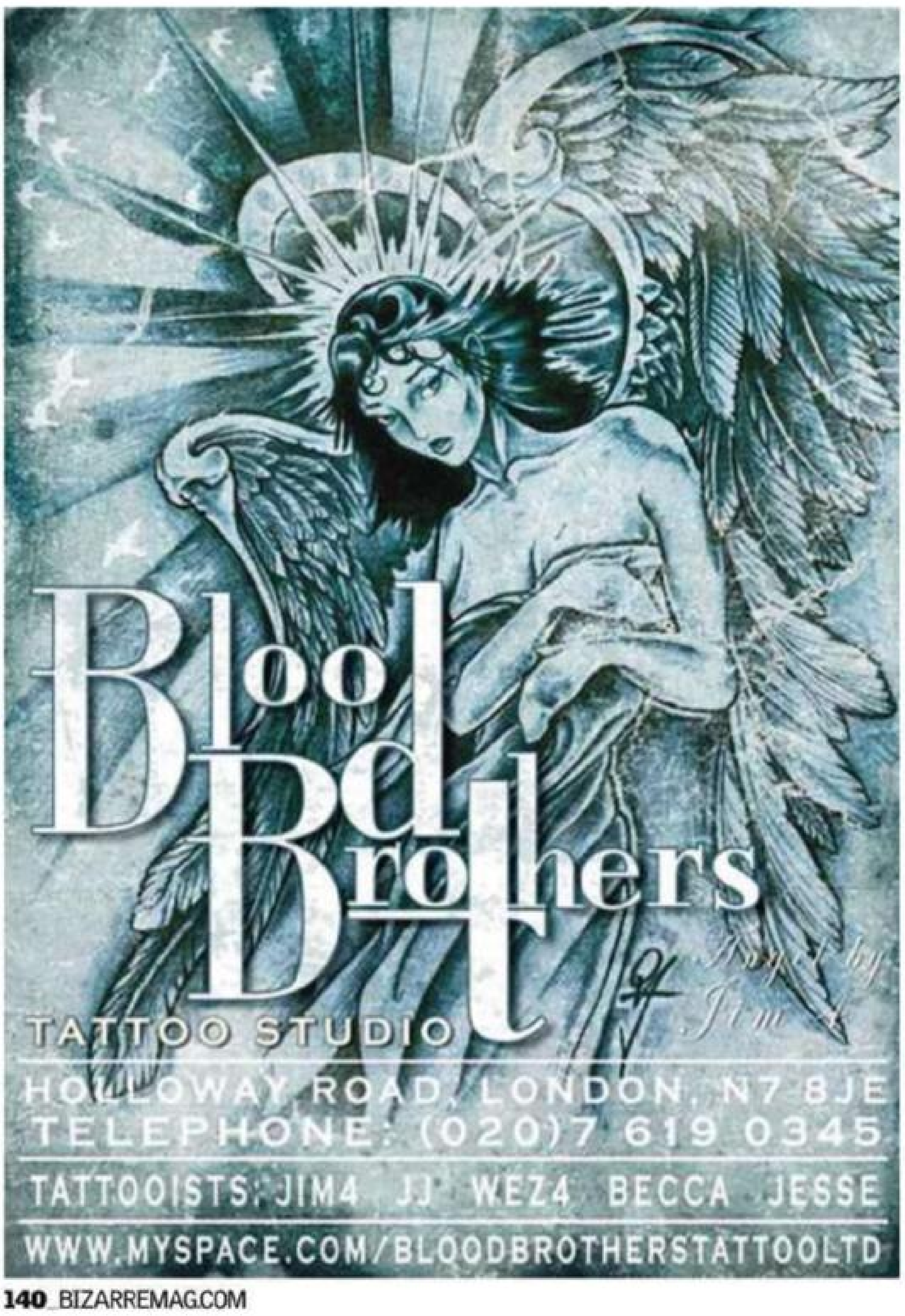

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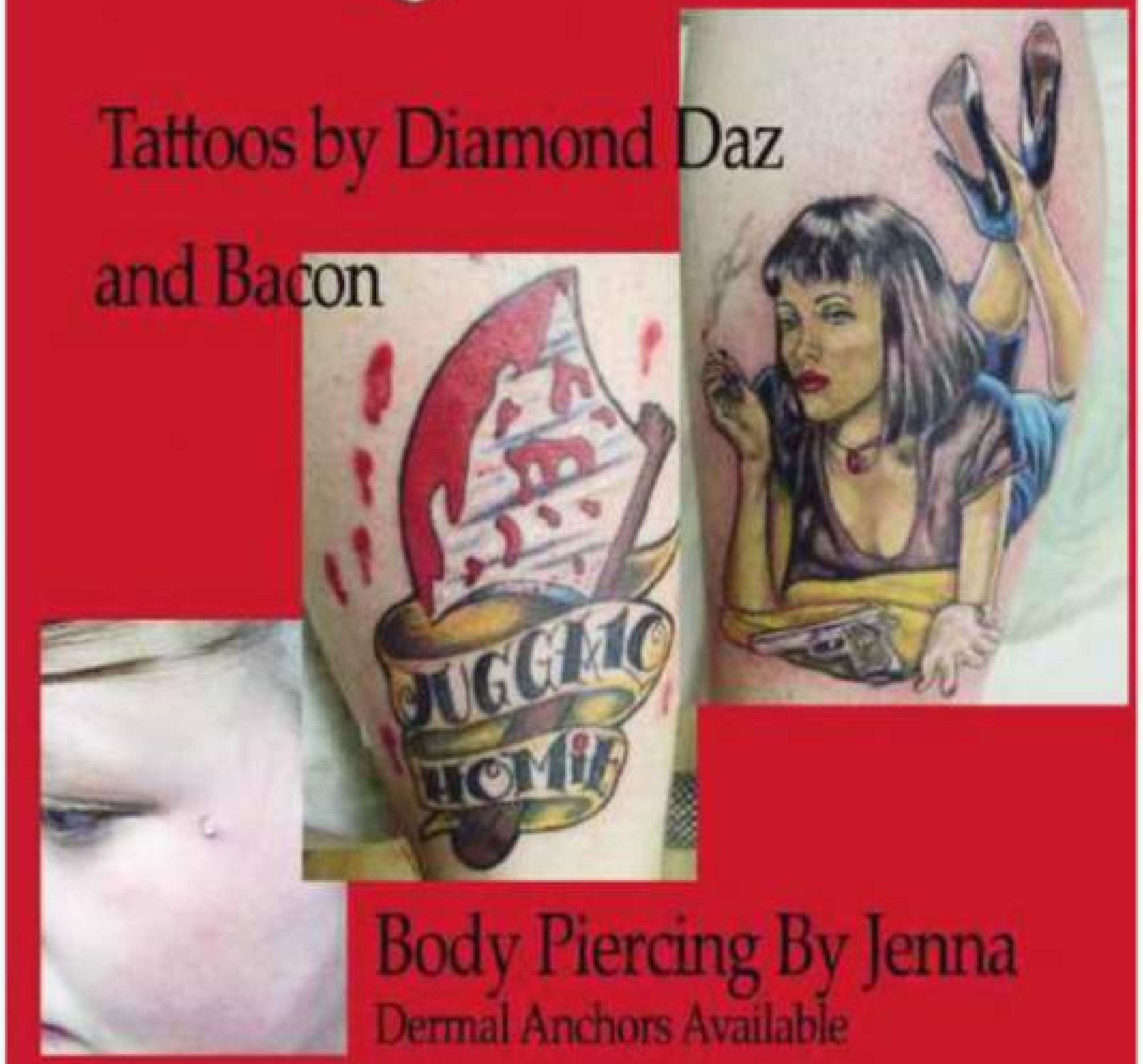

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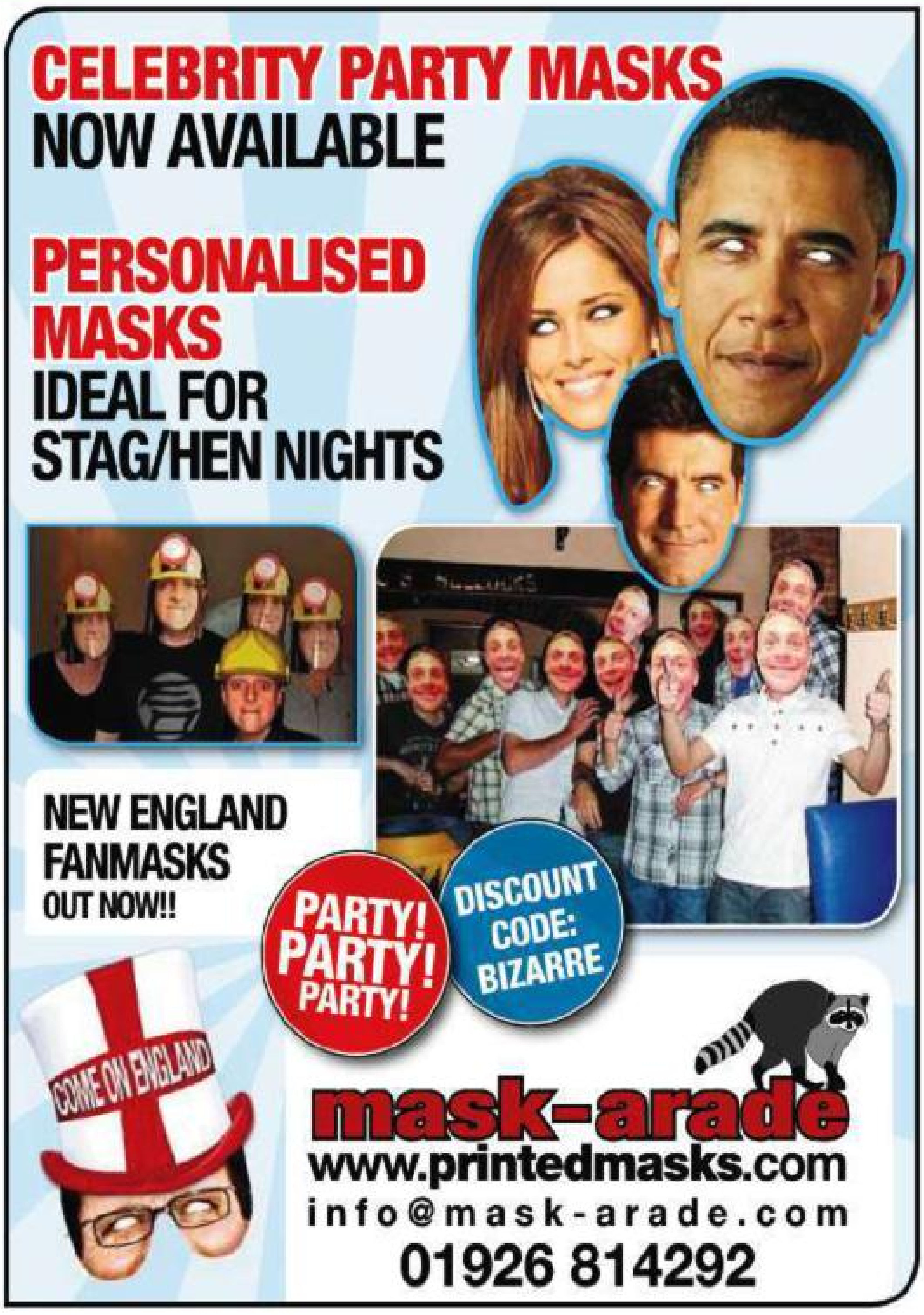
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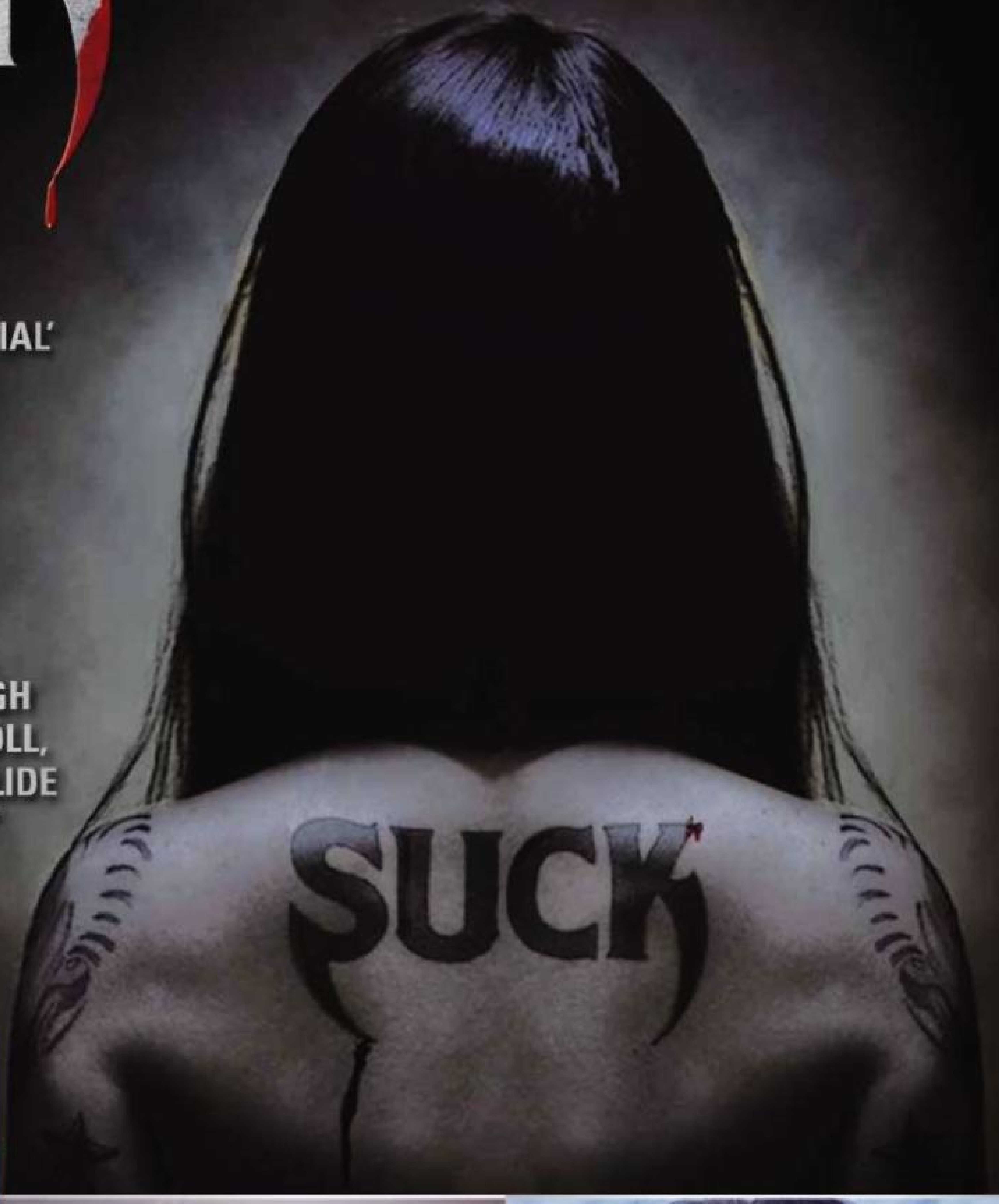

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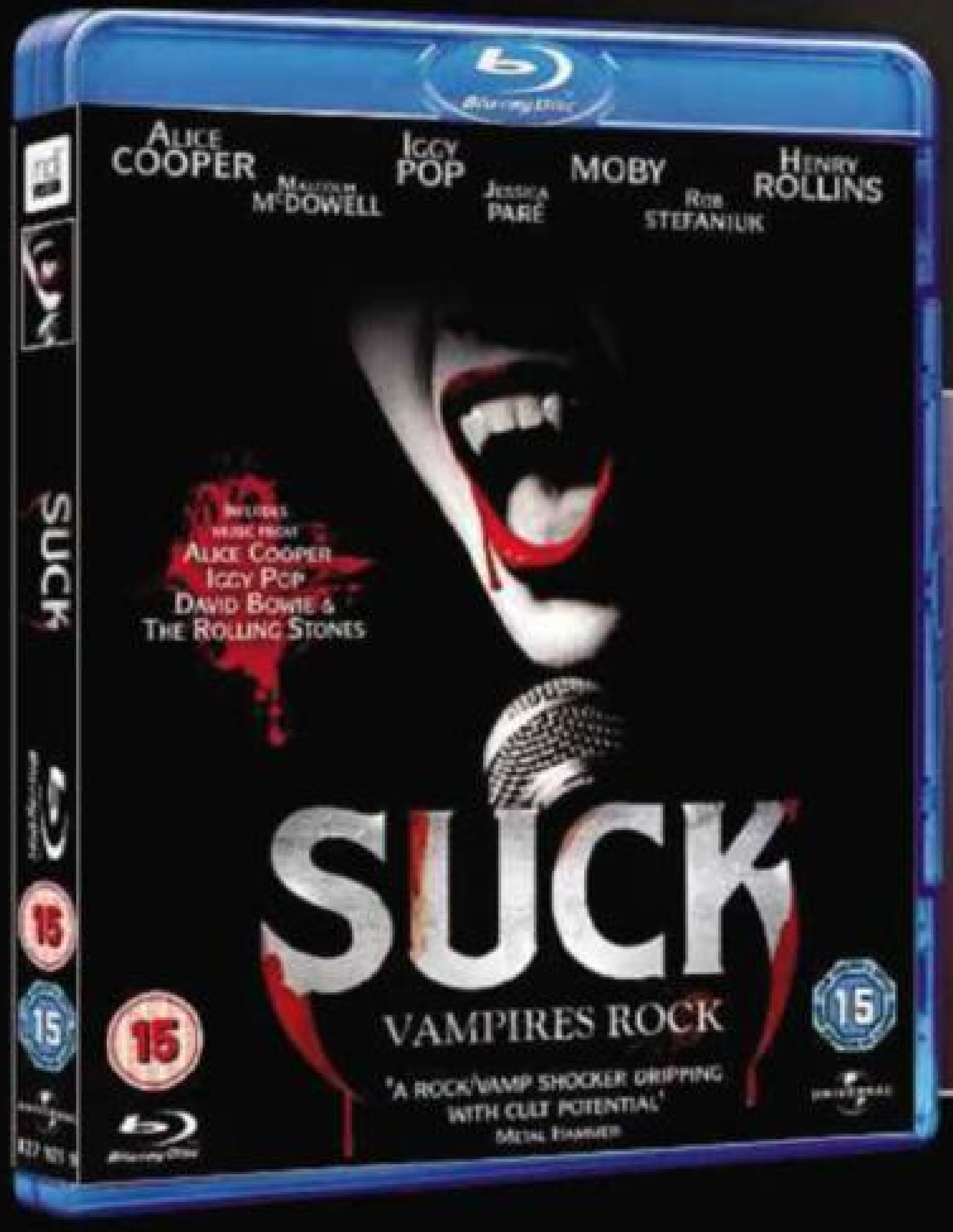
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